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ESSAYS IN BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

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BY

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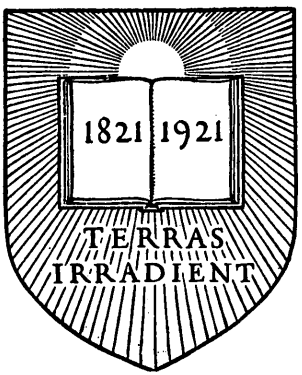

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THE PLIMPTON PRESS·NORWOOD·MASS·U·S·A

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PREFACE

THIS book does not claim to be a history of Biblical interpretation. It is an attempt to illustrate certain ways in which the Old Testament part of our Bible has been treated in the course of the Christian centuries. Since almost every theologian, Jewish or Christian, has directly or indirectly commented on the Scriptures, a complete history of this branch of science would seem to be beyond the powers of any one man. The index to Diestel's work, a work to which I have often referred, shows that he consulted nearly fourteen hundred different authors. The result is to bewilder rather than to help the inquirer. Some account of the main currents of thought in this department can be gathered, I venture to hope, from the following pages.

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I

HEBREW LITERARY METHODS

IN DEALING with an ancient book we need to enter into the author's mind. This means that we must know his environment, his habits of thought, and his purpose in writing. Where the object of our study is a collection of writings, like the one we know as the Old Testament, we must endeavor to understand each of the contributors. To understand the whole movement of which this collection is the monument we must bring the separate parts into their proper relations of time and space. The process thus indicated is criticism.[1]

These truisms so plainly imply the need of criticism for a correct understanding of our Old Testament that the necessity might be taken for granted. As a matter of fact, however, opposition, often bitter opposition, has been made to critical investigation of this Book, and this on two grounds. In the first place a tradition has attached itself to it, and this tradition is interwoven with certain religious experiences. To disturb the tradition seems to threaten religion, and religion is rightly regarded as one of man's most precious possessions. In the second place, Hebrew literary methods are so unlike those to which we are accustomed that when described by the critic they are met with incredulity. It is thought to be absurd to affirm that men made books in the way in which the critics

[1] Criticism of the text of an ancient document, which aims to recover its original wording is of course of primary importance, but it is not here under discussion.

discover the Hebrew books to have been made. What this is is now a matter of common knowledge. For one thing it is pointed out that the ancient author was so careless of his reputation that he took no pains to attach his name to his work. Unless Ezekiel be an exception, no one of the Old Testament writers is known to us by name. To us, to whom the fame of authorship is dear, this is almost incomprehensible. We should place the crown of laurel on the head of the poet of the book of Job as readily as we place it on the brow of the poet of the *Iliad*. He has cheated us of the opportunity, and himself of a monument more enduring than bronze, by preserving his anonymity. Moreover, when the Bible is presented to us as an authoritative code we are tempted to think that its authorship should be certified in some official way. A Protestant theologian advanced the theory that the various books of the Old Testament as soon as they were written were posted in a conspicuous place in the temple that all the people might take knowledge of them, and that when sufficient opportunity had been given they were taken down by the priests and carefully preserved in the archives. Needless to say, the theory has no support in the documents themselves, which are as careless about notarial authorization as they are about authorship.

In answer to the not unnatural demand for some sort of security on this head a tradition early arose which endeavored to assign the Biblical books to certain men whose names are made known to us in the books themselves. A post-biblical Jewish document[2] affirms that Moses wrote his own book, the section concerning Balaam, and Job; Joshua wrote his own book, and the last eight verses of the Pentateuch, which relate Moses' death, though some of the Rabbis thought that Moses wrote this also at the divine dictation; Samuel wrote his own book, Ruth, and Judges; David wrote the book of Psalms at the hands of the ten elders — Adam the first, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, Heman, Jeduthun, Asaph, and the three sons of Korah; Jeremiah wrote his own book, Kings,

[2] Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Bathra*, 14b and 15a.

and Lamentations; Hezekiah and his company wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Koheleth; the men of the Great Assembly wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve (Minor Prophets), Daniel, and Esther; Ezra wrote the genealogies in Chronicles down to his own time.

It is obvious from the date of this document, as well as from the absurdity of some of its statements, that it rests on no historical data. What could be less rational than to say that David wrote Psalms 'at the hands' of Adam, Abraham, Melchizedek, and Moses, all of whom lived long before his own time? The absurdity is a little less if we suppose the Rabbis meant that the books were edited rather than written by these worthies, and something of the kind may have been in their thought. In any case the tradition is simply the product of a desire to give the Hebrew books authority by attaching them to the names of men prominent in the history of their own people. The only result of our study of it is to throw us back onto the internal evidence of the books themselves.

Examination of the books and their comparison with each other brings one fact to light almost at a glance. This is that at least some of the books are the result of a compilatory process. Putting the two parallel narratives of Kings and Chronicles side by side we see that the later author has borrowed freely from his predecessor. He did not do what a modern writer would have done — work up the material taken from his sources into a homogeneous story. He took considerable blocks of the history of Kings, copying word for word. Between these sections he inserted other material, the most of it quite different in style and tone from the earlier matter. In other words, the Chronicler follows the method which the critics think they discover in other Old Testament books, the method which has met with objurgation and ridicule as if no sensible man would use it. Undoubtedly it is difficult for a modern author to recognize this method as legitimate. But we must remember that the idea of literary property was unknown, that is, it had not dawned on men's minds that the originator of a book had a right to forbid any one's making what use of

it he pleased. The book was the property of the man who bought it, and it never occurred to the Chronicler that any objection could be raised to his treating the earlier narrative as he thought fit. What he actually did is visualized in the Polychrome edition of the Hebrew text, where the blocks of red color show the material taken from the earlier source, the Chronicler's additions being left white. Any one can produce the same effect by using a red pencil on the passages parallel to the book of Kings.

The question naturally suggests itself whether if the book of Kings had perished we could still be sure that the Chronicler had followed this method of compilation. The answer cannot be doubtful. The sections inserted by him differ markedly from those which he borrowed. The rule is the general rule of literary criticism, namely, that difference of style indicates different authors. It is indeed true that in some cases a single writer uses different styles. But it is also true that each of his styles has the marks of his own personality. We can think of no reason why the Chronicler should use two different styles in adjacent paragraphs of his narrative. Had the book of Kings perished we should have been able to point out with certainty the material taken from it.

Any one who has doubts on this head should look carefully at the concluding chapters of the book of Judges, and compare the story in chapters xvii and xviii with the one that follows in xix and xx. The whole tone and atmosphere of the first is unlike what we find in the second. In each case there is a wrong committed. But Micah when he loses his sacred objects has no recourse. A few friends and kinsmen are all that he can rally to his aid. In the other case the whole nation rises as one man to punish the wrong-doer. Four hundred thousand warriors assemble, lose twenty-two thousand in one battle and eighteen thousand in another without being discouraged, and in their turn kill twenty-five thousand Benjamites. In the story of Micah on the other hand a band of six hundred warriors are all that one of the tribes can muster for a foray. With the historicity of either account we are not

now concerned. The sole point is that the contrast in tone is sufficient to convince us that the two narratives were written by different men.

Moreover a little consideration will show that neither one of these stories fits into the scheme of the book to which they are appended. The author or rather compiler of the book of Judges had a very distinct motive in putting his book into shape. He was teaching his people a lesson of loyalty to their God. His theory of history is that as long as Israel was faithful to its God it was prospered, but that when it fell away to the worship of the local Baals and Astartes the people were delivered into the hand of the oppressors. Deliverance came when they repented, and it came in the person of a divinely commissioned leader and hero. The hero-stories in the book are the examples to prove the thesis. But whatever we may think of the force of these hero-stories, it is clear that the two incidents we have been considering do not fit into the scheme. Neither in the case of Micah nor in that of the Levite and his concubine is there any question of the Baals and Astartes, nor is there any mention of backsliding and deliverance.

What we have discovered, without any special bias towards the higher criticism, is that at least four hands have been at work in this book of Judges. There was first the collector of the original hero-stories. Then came the theologian who made the stories tributary to his theory of backsliding and revival. Two appendices were added, each of which had its peculiar point of view. The book of Judges is not an isolated case. Most of the Hebrew books which have come down to us show similar phenomena. Even in the latest period we find that editors or copyists did not hesitate to treat the texts in their hands with great freedom. The books of Daniel, Esther, and Ezra, had sections inserted in them which are preserved in the Greek version, but which the Hebrew texts escaped. And lest we suppose that the Old Testament is peculiar in this respect we may notice that Arabic literatures gives conspicuous examples of exactly the same procedure. We are told

also that in Europe in the Middle Age "authors borrowed literally with great freedom and embodied fragments of other writers or whole books in their own works." Further we read that they did not scrutinize closely the statements of their predecessors; what had once been handed down they usually accepted as good.[3]

That the books of the Old Testament were treated with great freedom, even after they were regarded as in some sense authoritative, may be illustrated by later writings. A book which is entitled *Biblical Antiquities of Philo,* though not by Philo Judæus, is composed in the way illustrated by Chronicles. The author rewrites the history from Adam to the death of Saul, and in doing so he takes paragraphs from the Biblical text and fills in between them with other matter, either derived from tradition or the product of his own imagination. The process is visualized for us in the translation, by printing the Biblical material in italics, and the additional matter in Roman type.[4] The result is quite similar to what we observe in the Polychrome edition of Chronicles. Equally striking is the lesson taught by the so-called *Book of Jubilees.* The author of this book was not satisfied with the history of the earlier times recorded in the book of Genesis, though doubtless he regarded that book as divinely given. For one thing he wanted a more exact chronology, and he carefully reckoned the Jubilee periods (of forty-nine years each) from the creation onwards, dating each event of the narrative by the years within its Jubilee period. In the second place, he supplied information which he thought ought to be given in connection with the events recorded by the Biblical writer. Thus he tells us that the angels were created on the first day of the creative week, Moses having neglected this item. He knows the names of Adam's daughters as well as of his sons, gives Abraham's dying address, and a legend about his boyhood. He even goes so far as to justify those actions of the Patriarchs

[3] Vincent, J. M., *Historical Research* (N. Y., 1911), p. 111.

[4] *Biblical Antiquities of Philo,* translated from the Latin by M. R. James, London, 1917.

which the earlier narrative condemns. The slaughter of the men of Shechem now appears as a praiseworthy act, ordained in heaven, and it is made the occasion for enforcing the strictest prohibition of intermarriage with gentiles. The book in fact traces Levi's claim to the priesthood to his zeal in this matter, thus antedating a Mosaic ordinance. Pure Judaism is further favored by the statement that the two highest classes of angels were created circumcised. The Sabbath was observed by the Creator — so much we learn from the earlier narrative; but *Jubilees* makes the more definite declaration: "He gave us (the angels) the Sabbath as a sign that we should labor six days and rest from all labor on the seventh; and He enjoined upon all the angels of the Presence and all the angels of sanctity that they should observe the Sabbath with Him, both in heaven and on the earth." The post-exilic Jewish interest in the observance of the Law comes out in the reconstruction of the lives of the Patriarchs. Since the author cannot think these fathers of the race less pious than their descendants he carries the Mosaic ordinances back into the earlier time. Noah observes Pentecost; Abraham keeps both this feast and Tabernacles; the Day of Atonement is known to the sons of Jacob. Most significant is the introduction of the evil spirit Mastema to relieve God of responsibility when Abraham's faith is to be put to the test. The evil one, we read, came before God and said: "Abraham loves his son Isaac and delights in him above all things; command him to offer him as a burnt-offering and thou wilt see whether he will carry out thy command." The tendency is the same which induced the author of Chronicles to make Satan incite David to sin, instead of attributing the temptation to the God of Israel.[5]

Other examples might easily be found to show the Hebrew method even down to the Christian era. Note also that the authors of this period do not hesitate to attribute their writings to ancient worthies. Thus the book of Enoch claims to

[5] *The Book of Jubilees,* translated from the Ethiopic text by R. H. Charles, London, 1917. Although the complete book is preserved only in Ethiopic there is no doubt that it was originally written in Hebrew.

have an antediluvian patriarch as its author, and the book of Jubilees claims to have been revealed to Moses by an angel. Our judgment of the writers may easily be too severe. The underlying motive was sincerely religious. This is true both of the post-biblical writings and of the Biblical books themselves. Interest in history as history was unknown. The aim was to edify the reader. But the religious motive has two sides. For one thing, it seeks its justification in the past, and on this side it is conservative. But on the other hand religion cannot exempt itself from the law of change. Perhaps it would be more exact to say that the forms of thought with which religion associates itself change from generation to generation. Abraham was a sincere worshipper of God. But the idea which he had of God was certainly different from that of a twentieth century Christian or Jew. The religious teacher has a double task; he wishes to preserve the monuments in which religion has expressed itself in the past, and at the same time to make them teach lessons appropriate to the present. The Chronicler, to whom we may return for a moment, is an illustration. He wished to preserve the history of his nation because it was the nation favored by God. The part favored by God, however, was Judah alone. He therefore preserved the earlier narrative so far as it related the story of Judah, but left out all that concerned the northern kingdom alone. At the same time he found the history defective in that it did not bring out more clearly the matter which was to him of prime importance. This was the temple and its services. The most significant of the insertions which he makes in the narrative are those which tell of the Levites. In contrast with the book of Kings he emphasizes the presence of this guild at the removal of the Ark. He describes at length their complicated organization, and ascribes it to David — something of which the earlier narrative is ignorant. He makes Jehoshaphat send them out as teachers of the Law, and they even furnish the army of the priest Jehoiada when he secures the coronation of the young king Jehoash and the death of Athaliah — in this case in flat contradiction to the earlier narrative.

The Chronicler is adduced here not because he was an exception to the rule, but because he illustrates a tendency which we can trace in almost, if not quite all, the historical books. We have already seen that the author of Judges has his own religious thesis to establish, and that he did it by using earlier material which came to his hand. In some cases it is plain that a story has been rewritten to correct what the author regards as an erroneous view. Thus in the books of Samuel we have two accounts of the coronation of Saul. In one we read that the king was a gift of God's grace for the deliverance of the people (I Sam. ix and x). But another writer judged that this could not be, since Saul turned out to be a failure. He therefore wrote another account and represented the demand for a king as evidence of the incurable waywardness of the people (I Sam. viii and xii). Any one who will compare the two sections will convince himself that they cannot come from the same hand. And if it be said that, if the contradiction in point of view is as clear as it seems to us, an editor would not have combined the stories, we reply that this is where religious conservatism comes in. A devout man who possessed both documents could not bring himself to let either one be lost and therefore combined them. Probably if he reflected on the discrepancies he was able to satisfy himself with harmonistic hypotheses such as commentators delight in to the present day.

Another example would seem to be even more convincing, were it not for the spell laid upon us by traditional views. This is the story of the creation. We can hardly doubt that an early writer began his story with the statement: "In the day that Yahweh made earth and heaven no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up, for Yahweh had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground" (Gen. ii:4b, 5). He then went on with the delightful account of the Garden. To him there was nothing unworthy of the divinity in supposing Him to plant a garden, to mold man of clay, to experiment with the animals before discovering the right companion for man,

to walk in His garden in the cool of evening, to cross-question the man to find out what he had done, and to be jealous of the man's becoming "like God" in knowing good and evil. But in later times this anthropomorphic God was not appreciated, and the work of creation had to be represented differently. For this reason we have the account which we now read in the first chapter of the Bible. According to this the divine fiat is enough to bring the light into being, to separate land and water, to make the land produce plants, and the sea bring forth its swarming inhabitants. It is altogether probable that the writer of this cosmogony would have been willing to see his account displace the other. But again religious conservatism, for which we cannot be too grateful, refused to let either one perish, and combined them in the form in which they have been read for more than two thousand years.

It is not the purpose of the present essay to trace this process through the Old Testament. The delicate work of analysis has, however, been done by many scholars, and although they differ in detail, the results are in their main lines well established. What is of present interest to us is that the Old Testament literature was up to a certain point of time in a fluid state. Editors and copyists did not hesitate to supplement and revise their text in order to suit it to the time in which they lived. But there did come a date when this rewriting of ancient material and compilation from the various elements stopped. Apparently it was only after the fall of Jerusalem in the first century of our era that the scribes awoke to the danger of having the sacred volumes treated in the old irresponsible way. The Canon was then closed; that is, the collection of books was set apart as something sacred, which could not be increased or diminished. To prevent contamination, rules were drawn up for the copyists so that at least the copies officially authorized for use in the public service should contain the text handed down by the fathers. But although the conservative tendency seemed thus to triumph, religious ideas continued to change under the influence of the spirit of the age. How then could the ancient document continue to edify

the new generation? The answer is given by the commentaries. The text of the Book is sacrosanct. It must be handed on in the form which it has assumed. But it can be explained in a new sense so as to fit the ideas of a new time. The history of interpretation shows the interplay of the two forces which wrought in the compilation of the books. Conservatism attempts to hold onto the tradition embodied in the text, and progressive thought endeavors to read new meanings into the old words. The process had already begun in the Biblical period, for the Chronicler refers to the *Midrash* of the book of Kings. But *Midrash*, as we shall see, was the technical term for a commentary. To give some illustrations of the method in which the commentators have done their work is the purpose of these essays.

The result of our study will undoubtedly be to show that many attempts to explain the sense of an old Testament passage have really explained it away; and we may be tempted to accept the statement sometimes made that the Church has never really understood its Bible. In this sweeping form the declaration goes too far. Since the interest of Jewish and Christian scholars has not been primarily in history, in the sense in which we understand the word, it is not surprising that they have not taken our point of view. Their interest has been in religion, and religion has a permanent element which is above the considerations of time and space on which the historian dwells. The twenty-third Psalm appeals directly to the devout soul, and whether it was written by David in the tenth century B. C., or by an unknown believer in the fifth, is a matter of subordinate importance. A large part of the Old Testament appeals directly to the religious sense in this way, and it is this part which gives the Book its hold on Christians down to the present time. But it remains true that the historic process by which the great movement which we know as Judaism came to be what it was in itself, and what it was as a preparation for Christianity, has been clearly apprehended only in recent times.

II

LEGALISTIC INTERPRETATION

AS EARLY as the Maccabean period there existed among the Jews a party called the Asideans, or in the Hebrew form Hasidim, the Pious. Their principle was to obey the Law at all costs, but not to meddle with political affairs. Under great provocation indeed, when their religion was threatened, they took up arms. But as soon as they were allowed the free exercise of their customs they withdrew from the conflict, thus separating themselves from the nationalists who fought for the independence of their country. Their belief was that in His own good time their God would introduce His rule on earth. Until then the faithful had only to obey His will as laid down in the Law. The party which we know as Pharisees agreed with them in observance of the Law and for the most part in submission (though with no good will) to the gentile power.

The fall of Jerusalem in the year 70, and the failure of the desperate effort made in the next century under Bar Kochba, convinced the remnant of the people that the Asidean principle was right. Henceforth the energies of the Jew were directed to the observance of the Law. No doubt the motive was the belief, expressed in fact by some of their authorities, that if the Law were perfectly observed for a single day the Messiah would come. It is to be remembered also that the Law was the only thing to which the patriotism of the Jew could rally. His temple was destroyed and access even to its site was denied him; his sacred city was in the hands of strangers; his land was no longer his; the nation was scattered to all parts of the known world. One thing was common to all who remained loyal — the sacred Book. And in

this Book the fundamental part was the Pentateuch, the Tora given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Its own claim is that it is the final and perfect direction for those who would live so as to obtain the favor of God. The other books of the Hebrew Bible were valued indeed, but they were looked upon as commentaries on the Law, rather than as co-ordinate sources for the religion of Israel.

An elaborate Law (613 precepts are contained in the Pentateuch according to rabbinical computation) needs study and interpretation, all the more when, as in this case, it is in a language no longer commonly spoken by the people. The synagogue, which was a well-established institution in New Testament times, was organized to give the people instruction in the meaning of the Code, for obedience to the Code in every detail was obligatory on every Israelite as soon as he reached years of discretion. Even as early as the time of Nehemiah, we are told that when the Law was read in the public assembly, the Levites caused the people to understand the sense. The testimony is good at least for the time of the Chronicler to whom we owe the notice (Neh. viii:7f.), that is for the third century B.C. Whether at so early a date translation of the Hebrew text into Aramaic was customary we do not know. Aramaic was the language of common life to the Jews in Asia as Greek was to those in Egypt. In Egypt the Jews had a translation of their sacred Book into Greek certainly as early as 150 B.C., and it would not be strange if the Aramaic-speaking section of the nation had their need met in a similar way. The tradition is that at a later time translators were appointed for the synagogue and that when a small section of the Hebrew text was read, from one to three verses, the translator gave the sense in Aramaic. A prejudice existed against writing down these versions, so that in their earliest form they are not preserved to us. But after a time the Targums, as they are called, were put into written form. Their value for our present purpose is the testimony they give to the law of religious change working on a fixed text. They are in fact the earliest commentaries. Even the one which adheres most

closely to the original, that of Onkelos, does not hesitate to read the ideas of its own time into the text. It avoids anthropomorphisms, softens expressions which in the view of the translator give an unworthy idea of the Patriarchs, and introduces matter not thought of by the sacred writer. For example, it refuses to allow that man by his disobedience became "like one of us" (divine beings, that is), and only declares that man has become a being unique in kind in that he knows good and evil. According to the Hebrew text Abraham says on one occasion: "When God made me wander from the house of my father." The Targum expands: "When the people went astray after the works of their hands, and the Lord brought me near to Him from the house of my father." Evidently the translator has in mind the tradition known to us later in its fuller form, and which has passed over to the *Muslims*. According to this story Abraham was obliged to flee from Mesopotamia because his family were idolaters. Where the Hebrew Law gives the prohibition, somewhat difficult for us to understand, against boiling a kid in its mother's milk, the Targum replaces it by the traditional formula: "Thou shalt not eat flesh and milk together."

The other Targums are much more free in their treatment of the text. A single example must suffice. In the Song of Deborah we have the verses rendered in our version: "They chose new gods; then was there war in the gates: was there shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel? My heart is towards the governors of Israel that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye Jehovah." [1] The Targum has the following: "When the Sons of Israel were willing to serve new idols that were worshipped by their neighbors, with which their fathers had had no dealings, there came upon them the nations and drove them from their cities, but when they turned to the Law they had no power over them, until Sisera, the enemy and oppressor, came with forty thousand captains, fifty thousand swordsmen, sixty thousand lance-

[1] Judge v: 8f. Whether the Hebrew text is sound does not concern us. It was certainly the text which the translator had before him.

men, seventy thousand bearers of shields, eighty thousand archers, besides the nine hundred chariots of iron which he had, and his own chariot. All these thousands and all these troops were not able to stand before Barak and the ten thousand men with him. Deborah said in her prophesying: I am sent to praise the *scribes* of Israel who, when that trouble came, did not cease from interpreting the Law. And how beautiful of them that they sit in the synagogues with uncovered heads, and teach the people the words of the Law, blessing and praising the Lord."

Comment is almost unnecessary. The homiletic aim has outweighed every thought of accurate adherence to the text. The fondness for exaggerated numbers which we have reason to suspect led to some of the statements of the Chronicler is here distinctly in evidence. The Rabbinical point of view has changed the heroes of Israel from warlike leaders, who threw themselves into the fight on behalf of their people, into scribes whose virtue consisted in continuing their work even in times of persecution. Doubtless this sort of heroism has been often enough exemplified in the long period of persecution through which the scattered nation has gone, and we need not undervalue it. But that it is of a different sort from that praised by Deborah is clear. The change in point of view between pre-exilic and post-exilic times is what interests us here. But let us look a little more closely at the situation.

The theory of the final redactor of the Pentateuch was that he had compiled a complete code for the regulation of life — for the Jew, that is; the gentile did not concern him. But a complete code of ethics cannot be put down in black and white. The exigencies of life are too manifold, and changed conditions must be met by new rules, or new interpretations of the old ones. Every written law gives rise to casuistry. Some one must decide whether a given case comes within the meaning of the law. Moreover the *ethos* of a community contains more and also less than is specified in the statute. Along two lines therefore Jewish anxiety to conform to the divinely given code gave rise to a tradition which grew in bulk

as the centuries rolled on. The immediate task was to define what came under a specific rule. The Law strenuously forbids work on the Sabbath. The question at once arises: What is work? Is writing work? Is it work to carry a parcel from one house to another? The earnestness with which such questions were discussed led often to what we consider trivialities, but it attests the sincerity of the motive. Doubtless the desire to display intellectual acuteness led to the posing of questions *in thesi,* but that is inevitable where an ancient document is made the object of study.

Besides the necessity of defining what the Law requires, there arose new conditions not foreseen by the legislator. The growth of law may be observed in any community, and this growth often takes place by a fictitious assumption that the new case can be brought under an already existing statute. The exigency laid upon the Jews was more exacting than in the case of other communities. Their legislator was providing for a state of things which no longer existed. He had in mind a priestly nation with its temple as its capital. His main interest was in having that temple kept from pollution, and its services carried on without interruption. But the Jews had lost their temple and their land. How difficult was the adjustment to life in the dispersion may be illustrated by an anecdote preserved in the Talmud. This relates that after the destruction of Jerusalem many Jews refused to eat flesh or drink wine. The reason was that the flesh could not be consecrated by sacrifice, nor the wine by libation. In other words, the meat and drink were unclean — a point of view already expressed in the earlier time (Hos. ix:3). The Rabbi who convinced these men of their error did it by a *reductio ad absurdum.* He showed that the same reasoning would apply to bread, for the grain could not be consecrated by the offering of the first sheaf, and also to fruits, because in this case also it was impossible to bring the first fruits, as was commanded.[2] The result would be suicide by starvation which was not only a crime in itself, but which would result in the extermination

[2] *Baba Bathra,* 60b.

of the nation, and of course the frustration of all their hopes of a restoration.

Compelled to live in conditions which the Law did not contemplate, and yet constrained by their religious faith to hold fast to the Law, it is not strange that the people used all their ingenuity to apply the old rules to the new situation. The belief was that every verse of Scripture was of direct divine authorship, and not only the literal affirmation of the text was binding, but all that it logically implied. It is in fact difficult to put limits to the meaning of an inspired Scripture. As a loyal Jew states it: There is no science and no knowledge whatever that is not contained in the Tora.[3] The result in later speculation, according to which every word of the Law has seventy faces or meanings, does not now concern us. Legalistic interpretation scanned the sacred text to find justification for customs which were not directly commanded. Thirteen rules were formulated by which this could be done. They attempt to classify the various methods of arguing *a minori ad majus, a majori ad minus,* from analogy, from the special case to the general rule.[4] But one limitation was insisted on; no deduction must conflict with the established tradition of the schools. A Rabbi says: He who interprets a verse of Scripture contrary to the Halaka has no part in the world to come.

Halaka, be it noted, is the technical term for a rule of conduct, that by which one should *walk,* regulate his life. These rules, the discussions concerning them, anecdotes in illustration and other material more or less related, make up the body of tradition called the Talmud. What is not directly contained in the Pentateuch is called the Oral Law, and it is legitimated by the theory that at Sinai Moses received not only the written Code but the whole body of traditions as well. These were handed down through faithful transmitters until they reached the Rabbis, who wrote them down. The specific assertion is

[3] Manasseh ben Israel, *The Conciliator,* p. 213.

[4] Friedländer, *Geschichtsbilder aus der Zeit der Tannaiten und Amoräer* (1879), p. 76f.

made that everything that a Rabbi was to inculcate in the future was contained in the revelation to Moses,[5] and the reason is given that Moses himself declared that he received *all the words* that the Lord had spoken to him (Deut. ix:10). That this really makes the tradition superior to the written Law needs no demonstration, but this is a phenomenon that recurs in the whole history of Biblical study. And on this ground we can understand, if we cannot wholly justify, the saying recorded in another Midrash that the words of the wise are more precious than the words of Scripture. The Rabbi bases his declaration on the text "For thy love is better than wine." (Cant. i:2). The Scripture is wine, but there is something better and this must be the words of the teacher.[6]

As a single illustration of legalistic treatment let us take the opening of the Talmud. It begins with the question: At what time does one recite the Shema of evening? The question assumes that it is the duty of every loyal Israelite to recite the profession of faith, known from its opening word as the *Shema,* and that this should be done morning and evening. The text is the familiar verse in Deuteronomy: "Hear (*Shema*) O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up."[7] The Biblical author in his rhetorical way, is urging his readers or hearers to keep constantly in mind the exhortations and commands contained in his book. There is no indication that he expects these particular verses to be singled out for daily recitation. To interpret the paragraph as a law is to put more upon it than it was intended to bear — and also less, for it is conceivable

[5] *Midrasch Koheleth* (in *Bibliotheca Rabbinica,* 1880), p. 18.

[6] *Midrasch Schir-ha-Schirim* (*Ibid.*), p. 18.

[7] Deut. vi: 4-7. I have translated according to the Jewish understanding, and have not thought it necessary to give the complete text of the formula.

that the recitation of the formula might become a mere exercise of the memory, satisfying the conscience as an *opus operatum,* and interfering with the whole-souled devotion to the Law which the author was endeavoring to secure. It is easy to say of course that the danger of formalism is not confined to any one religion, and that the Jews are not sinners above others in this respect. We are not bringing an accusation, but making an historical study, and the example is cited simply to show how a particular command is derived from a particular text.

The sequel shows what is meant by casuistry, for the obligation to recite the formula being recognized, it is necessary to define what is meant by morning and evening. How late does the duty last, and how early does it begin? Rabbi Gamaliel's sons were at a banquet which kept them to the small hours. On coming home they asked whether it was too late to recite the evening Shema. His reply was: If the dawn does not yet show itself you are under obligation. Similarly, a decision on the morning hour is given; Morning begins as soon as one is able to distinguish a white thread from a colored one. The subsequent discussion turns on the words of the Biblical text: When thou liest down and when thou risest up. Since kings and wealthy men sleep late, the time for the morning exercise is extended to the third hour of the day.

This simple example illustrates what the Rabbis mean by putting a hedge about the Law. It was their duty, as they conceived it, to provide for all possible cases, and prevent the least infringement of the command. Much more elaborate examples might be cited. Especially where there was the slightest risk of defilement by contact with gentiles and gentile objects of worship, or with the things classed as abominations, all conceivable exigencies were considered. This is undoubtedly in line with the intention of the Law, for a large part of the Pentateuch is devoted to the subject of ritual defilement. According to the early distinction between sacred and profane, contamination of the two spheres must be prevented. The sacred building, the sacred persons, the sacred implements,

and the sacred community, must be protected. Since the world, especially the gentile world in which the Jews now live, is full of objects which, being in no connection with the God of Israel, are counted as profane, the number of problems with which the faithful Jew is confronted may be imagined. While the Talmud faithfully adopts the Pentateuchal point of view, it goes more into detail. It classifies the objects which are to be avoided, and defines the degree of uncleanness that adheres to each. Some are not only taboo in themselves but the source of taboo in others, while some only contract uncleanness. It is not necessary to give examples, as we are concerned with the method of Biblical interpretation which in this matter offers few peculiarities.

As has been said, the Halaka deals with practical exigencies, defining the rules by which the faithful Jew must live. But legalism could not absorb all the energies of the race. The synagogue was primarily a school of ethics, but it was also a place of worship and a social centre. The public speaker must interest and entertain as well as instruct. Hence there arose a literature which is not directly legalistic or casuistic. This is called Haggada, and the documents in which it is embodied bears the name Midrash. The name itself testifies to the claim that the material is derived from the Scripture, for the verbal root from which the noun is derived means *to search out,* and it is applied specifically to searching the Scriptures for their hidden meaning. The Talmud contains both Halaka and Haggada, but the books which are entitled Midrash consist almost entirely of Haggada. The material is really homiletic, and represents the method of the preacher who ostensibly bases his sermon on a text, but often enough departs far from his starting point. Here we see the play of fancy, willing to draw the attention by far-fetched or paradoxical deductions.

Allegory, to which the next essay is devoted, comes into play in the endeavor thus to edify the hearer, and in its fully developed form will be discussed later. But the premise from which it starts, namely that there must be more in the text

than appears on the surface, is exemplified in almost every chapter of the Midrash. For example, when Jacob is said to pray for bread to eat and clothing to wear, the religiously minded reader feels that the ancestor of the chosen people could not be thinking of mere material things. He must have meant the Tora (spiritual nourishment) and the sacred Prayer-shawl (the tallith). Since in a divinely given book there can be nothing superfluous or accidental, any deviation from the ordinary must have meaning. The word translated *and He formed* (ויצר Gen. ii: 7), is written, contrary to analogy, with two *yodhs;* this points to the fact that man is composed of *two* elements, earthly and heavenly. Ecclesiastes (ix:14) writes of a little city with few men in it. He means the world of Noah's time; the great king who besieges it is God, the poor wise man who delivers it is Noah. The four streams of Eden represent the four world empires. Jacob's meeting with the shepherds is thus expounded: The well in the field is Zion; the three flocks are the three sacred festivals; the great stone is the joy in the temple when the water is drawn for the feast of Tabernacles. The ground for such expositions (if we concede that name to them) is parallelism of a sort, though to our apprehension remote. The number *four* of one passage is brought into connection with the same number in the other, and play with numbers is always attractive to the imaginative mystic. So in the second case just cited the number *three* gives the clue. Similarly the three branches of the vine which Pharoah's butler saw in his dream allude to the three characters prominent in the story of the exodus — Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. The vine therefore typifies Israel. This identification is doubtless fortified by the figure of the vine applied to Israel in Psalm lxxx. More remote, and to our taste, grotesque, is the assertion that the 'little sister' of Canticles (viii: 8) means Abraham.

The play on numbers is facilitated by the fact that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were used as numerals, as was the case also with the Greek. What welcome aid this afforded the Christian Fathers we shall see later. Among the

Hebrews a whole science or pseudo-science is based on the numerical value of the letters. The numerical value of the letters in the name of Shem amounts to 340, the years from the deluge to the confusion of tongues. The theory is that the correspondence cannot be accidental. The account of the creation begins with the *second* letter of the alphabet whereas we might have expected the first letter (*aleph*) to stand at the beginning. The reason is that *two* worlds were created instead of one, either the earthly and heavenly, or the two æons, the present and the one to come. Or as an alternative we may suppose that there is an allusion to the *two* Laws written and oral. In fact the number of hypotheses of this kind has no limit. This same letter opens the account of the creation, because it is, in Hebrew as in English, the initial of the word *Blessing,* whereas *aleph* is the initial of the word meaning *cursed.* An apparently superfluous H in the word meaning *created* is an indication that the world was created for the sake of Abraham. The anagram is taken seriously (בראשית = בהבראם). In Genesis i: 24 we read that the earth is to bring forth living beings, cattle, reptiles and beasts of the earth — four kinds. But the next verse, which relates the carrying out of the command mentions only three. The reason is (according to the Midrash) that the fourth kind is the demons. God had got so far as to create their souls and was about to give them bodies when the Sabbath intervened and they were left disembodied spirits.

Further examples of this play with numbers are easily found. The seven lambs of Abraham's covenant (Gen. xxi: 28) represent either seven generations of Abraham's descendants, or the seven Israelites slain by the Philistines, or again the seven sanctuaries mentioned in Scripture, or finally the seven months that the Ark was in the land of the Philistines. The only reason for grouping these incongruous data together is the recurrence of the number seven. The 127 years of Sarah's life correspond to the 127 provinces ruled over by Esther. From David's sixfold lament over his son Absalom

the Targum concludes that the unhappy young men went through the seven gates that lead to the lowest hell. The first word of the Bible consists of six letters. What better reason can be found than that it contains a hidden allusion to the six classes of beings that were to be created? By anagram this same word can be made to read "on the first of (the month) Tishri." This proves that this, the Jewish New Year, is the birthday of the world. A word in the account of Jacob's dream (Gen. xxviii:17), the sum of whose letters is eighteen, tells us of the distance between earth and sky.[8] In Genesis xiv we read that Abraham armed 318 servants born in his house. But elsewhere we read that his house-born servant was Eliezer. Curiously enough the letters of Eliezer's name sum up to 318. The inference is that Abraham's army consisted of this one man. Whether in fact the writer of Genesis xiv had this equation in mind we need not stop to inquire; our business is with the haggadic exegesis. By the same method every letter of Isaac's name is significant because of its numerical value. The first means ten — the ten commandments; the second, ninety, gives the age of Sarah at the boy's birth; the third, eight, alludes to the eighth day on which he was circumcised, and the last letter has the value of Abraham's age at the time. Doubtless it would be a mistake to give much weight to material of this kind. The Bible was the student's textbook and every correspondence that could be pointed out not only stimulated interest but aided the memory. Theologically it might be well to notice that an apparently superfluous *waw* in Gen. ii:4, had the value of six, and this was the precise number of things which Adam lost by his fall, but which will be restored to him in the coming age.[9] They are: his glory (Judg v: 31), his life (Is. lxv:22), his stature (Lev. xxvi:13), the fruits of the earth, the fruit of the tree of life (Zech. viii:12), and the luminaries (Is. xxx:26).

The literal or historical sense is lost out of sight when the text is treated in this way. The theory of direct divine

[8] *Bereschith Rabba* (*Bibliotheca Rabbinica*), p. 336. [9] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

authorship seemed to authorize the student to take each sentence by itself as an oracle. That the Jews were not sinners above other men in this atomizing treatment of the sacred Book we shall have occasion to notice. What results from taking each sentence or each fragment as an oracle is to make every sort of deduction legitimate. In Job we read of the mountain falling and the rock removed from its place (Ch. xiv:18). The falling mountain is Lot whose disastrous experiences account for the adjective, whereas the rock removed from its place is Abraham who removed from his native land. The identification is helped by the fact that in one passage Abraham is referred to as the rock whence Israel was hewn (Is. li:1). The Song of Songs found a place in the Canon because it was expounded allegorically. We are not surprised therefore to learn that the sixty queens and eighty concubines of Solomon are not meant to tell us of the king's harem. The sixty queens are Abraham and his descendants as enumerated in one of the genealogies, and the eighty concubines are Noah and his descendants. The next verse in this same chapter says: "My dove, my undefiled, is one." This means Israel who preserves his fidelity to God. As an alternative we are allowed to suppose that the dove means Abraham; the *only child of her mother* is Isaac; the *choice one of her that bare her* is Jacob; the *daughters who saw her,* are the twelve tribes of Israel; and *she whom the queens and concubines praise* is Joseph.[10]

The skeptical book of Ecclesiastes gave special opportunity for this sort of exegesis. Where the author recommends an epicurean philosophy: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and make himself enjoy good in his labor," the Midrash assures us that by eating and drinking the Scripture means increase in learning and good works. Where Solomon speaks of his great works, his houses, his vineyards, his gardens, and his trees, he means the tables of the Law, the synagogues, the rows of scholars, the

[10] *Bereschith Rabba* (*Bibliotheca Rabbinica*), p. 439.

Mishna, and the Gemara. The Biblical author in his pessimism declares that the crooked cannot be made straight. The Commentator hastens to limit the dictum to the present world, and actually finds in the verse assurance of a future life where all will be made straight. The poor but wise youth of iv:13 is identified with the good impulse of the heart.[11]

Since all Scripture is the word of God, there can be no contradictions in it — an assumption that underlies the exegesis of Christians as well as Jews. Since, however, there are apparent discrepancies, the labor of the expositor must be directed to their harmonization. The Rabbis were not negligent of this department of study. Two large volumes containing their endeavors were compiled by Manasseh ben Israel in the seventeenth century, and are accessible in an English translation. Examination shows that the discrepancies discussed are due in reality to the fact, first brought into clear light by the higher criticism, namely that two or more different documents are combined in the Biblical books. Thus several of the instances endeavor to harmonize the two accounts of creation contained in the early chapters of Genesis. Where one account dates the creation of the plants on the third day and that of man on the sixth, the other places the creation of man at the beginning and the plants are not made to grow until there is a man to take care of the garden. The Rabbis are compelled to suppose that the plants were really created on the third day, but remained hidden below the surface of the soil until man appeared and prayed for rain. A crux was the verse: "Let *us make man,*" since it was used by the Christians as an argument for the Trinity. It was therefore explained to mean that God took counsel with the heavens and the earth. The anthropomorphisms naturally gave trouble, being irreconcilable, if taken literally, with the more spiritual declarations of Scripture itself. One passage affirms that Yahweh *came down* to see what was going on in Sodom,

[11] The examples are taken from the *Midrasch Koheleth* in the *Bibliotheca Rabbinica* translated by Wünsche.

whereas Jeremiah declares that He fills heaven and earth. Or contrast Yahweh's own statement that He will *pass over* the houses of the Israelites and when He sees the Passover blood on the doors will not suffer the destroyer to enter, with Daniel's thanksgiving that God knows what is in the darkness. Of course it was easy for the Rabbis, as it has been for later commentators, to say that such expressions were metaphorical, but the diffuse attempts at explanation make us suspect that this was not always found to be satisfactory. Even in the legislative portions of the Pentateuch it is not always possible to assert that the statutes are harmonious. The differences between Deuteronomy and the Priestcode therefore receive special attention. In the historical books the oft-debated problem of Saul's ignorance of David, whom nevertheless he has had as his trusty adjutant, strikes the reader, and the attempts at harmonizing what are really two accounts are much like those we read in later apologies. The ingenuity goes so far as to demonstrate, at least to the satisfaction of the expositor himself, that Reuben did not commit incest, that the sons of Eli were not guilty of fornication, and that David was not an adulterer.[12]

These examples might be added to indefinitely and perhaps they have already tried the reader's patience. What they show is that the ostensible explanation of the sacred text is in many cases only a way of reading into it the ideas of the expositor. Some sort of a curb to extravagant fancies was however found to be necessary, and it was declared that no one should expound Scripture contrary to the Halaka, that is, the tradition accepted in the schools.[13] That this made tradition and not Scripture the rule is of course clear, but ought not to surprise us. In fact, as we have seen, the oral Law was quite on a level with the written Word. And when this is realized we are less astonished than we otherwise should be to find that the commentators venture on occasion

[12] *The Conciliator of Manasseh ben Israel,* translated by E. H. Lindo, London, 1842.

[13] This seems to be the meaning of *Aboth* 3: 12, repeated in *Synedrin* 99a.

to change the reading of their text. The unvocalized text, which was in the hands of the Rabbis, invites speculation, for the consonants may be read in more than one way. But even the consonantal text was not exempt from tampering. Thus the Midrash suggests that by substituting a *waw* for a *yodh* in a word used in Psalm xlviii:14, we get the information that God will lead the dance of His people. It must not be supposed that the new reading was intended to displace the old. Both were accepted and the theory of inspiration was broad enough to cover both.

In the great mass of material contained in the Talmud and the related books it is easy to pick out portions that seem to us trivial, absurd, or even immoral. Abundant use has been made of this opportunity by Antisemites to blacken the character of the Jewish community. Attacks upon the "hardened and obstinate Jews" have been based on the Talmud from the time of Eisenmenger[14] down to the present day. Probably the judgment of Christian scholars would assent to Farrar's rhetorical peroration:

> The methods radically untenable, the results all but absolutely valueless, the letter-worship and traditionalism which date their origin from the days of Ezra, the idolatry of the Law, the exaltation of ceremonial, the quenching of the living and mighty spirit of prophecy, the pedantry, the exclusiveness, the haughty self-exaltation of Rabbinism, the growth of an extravagant reverence for the oral rules which form a hedge about the Law, are results in themselves deplorable. But they become still more deplorable when we see that meanwhile all that was essential, divine, and spiritual, was set at naught by human invention.[15]

These are very bitter words, and they show the danger we run in fastening our attention on one aspect of the great codex we are studying. We forget that Biblical exposition is not the main interest of the Rabbis. They were redactors of the traditions of their people. Their religious earnestness,

[14] *Entdecktes Judentum*, 1711. The subtitle claims that the book is a thorough and truthful account of the way in which the stubborn Jews blaspheme and dishonor the Holy Trinity, insult the Holy Mother of Christ, and scoff at the Christian religion.

[15] F. W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation* (Bampton Lectures, 1886), p. 105.

their almost desperate determination to preserve the heritage of the fathers, and their constant faith that only by obedience to the oral as well as the written Law could they serve God, deserve to be kept in mind. Were pedantry, exclusiveness, and self-exaltation the characteristic notes of this literature, it is hard to believe that it could have kept its place in the affection of the Jews down to our own time. In fact there is in the Talmud much that breathes the spirit of religious trust and moral earnestness. Jewish apologists have gone so far as to claim that it is the original from which the Gospel derives all that Christians value. So much we can hardly concede. But to be fair we should recognize that if the Rabbis read into the Bible what was not there, they did no more than many Christian scholars have done. Even now it is difficult for many Christians to think of Abraham as in any way different from the men whom we of the twentieth century regard as models. If the Jewish wise men supposed Adam, who was in direct communion with his Creator, to have been the wisest of men, similar theories have been entertained and uttered by Christian commentators. The Jewish demonstration may not commend itself to us sober literalists, for it is based on one of those fanciful interpretations that we have already become acquainted with. The Rabbis say that Adam's work, which is described as dressing the garden and keeping it, was really to study the Tora and keep the commandments, since the text says "to keep the way of the tree of life." The Tora is the true tree of life, as we are told by Solomon (Prov. iii:18), and this makes the demonstration complete.

That high moral earnestness lies behind many of these strange interpretations of the written word may be illustrated by the benediction pronounced on those who sow beside all waters and send forth the feet of ox and ass (Is. xxxii: 20). This means (says the Talmud): Blessed are you, Israel, that you study the Tora, and show kindness, for then you subdue (send forth) your evil passions, and not they you.[16] The

[16] *Aboda Zara*, 5b.

interpretation is suggested, as in so many cases, by the recurrence of the word *sow* in the phrase 'sow righteousness' (Hos. x:12). Archdeacon Farrar's charge of self-exaltation of the Rabbis is based on passages which are intended to emphasize the study of the Law. Since the real work of Israel is the observance of the commandments, and since happiness in this world and the next depends on the observance, the importance of the teacher follows as a matter of course. God Himself, we are told, spends three hours a day in the study of His own Law,[17] and even asks the help of leading Rabbis. The three pillars on which the world rests are the Tora, the ritual, and kindness.[18] One should live on bread and water, sleep on the bare ground, live a life of self-denial and devote one's self to the study of the Law. Then it will be well with him in this world and in the one to come. He who learns a single paragraph, a single verse, a single letter of the sacred book from his neighbor must hold him in honor.[19] If one's father and his teacher are both in captivity and he can ransom only one, the teacher should be the one chosen, for the father gives physical life only, while the teacher fosters the spirit.[20] A Jewish scholar of the nineteenth century gives the orthodox point of view: "A sacred Book, any mistake about which involves temporal and eternal ruin, demands exposition more than any work of antiquity, especially when, as in this case, new conditions of political and social life modify men's convictions." From this point of view the honor in which the Rabbi is held in every Jewish community is intelligible.

Since the Law has this value, in the sight of God as well as in the minds of men, its gift to Israel is a sign of God's love. Far from being a burden, as Christians regard it, it is the glory of the chosen people. A question arises in the gentile mind just here: If the boon is so great why is it given to one small fraction of the race only and withheld from the mass of mankind? The Rabbis could of course take refuge in the

[17] *Aboda Zara*, 3b.
[18] *Pirqe Aboth*, 1, 2.
[19] *Qinyan Tora*, 4.
[20] *Baba Mezia*, 33a.

incomprehensible decree of the Maker. But they were not all content with this as a sufficient answer. They assumed that the Law had actually been offered to all nations, but Israel was the only one that accepted it. When the nations are arraigned at the bar of God at the Judgment they will say: Lord of the worlds, has thou given us a Tora and did we refuse it? But, says the Talmud, how can they say this? It is written: The Lord came from Sinai, is gone forth from Seir, and shined out from Mount Paran; and again: God came from Teman and the Holy One from Mount Paran (Hab. iii:3, cf. Deut. xxxiii:2). Rabbi Johanan says that from these passages we see that God offered the Law to all peoples and tongues, but all except Israel refused. Even Israel accepted on compulsion, for God lifted the mountain over them and threatened to crush them with it unless they would accept the Law. This statement is a deduction from the verse (Ex. xix:17): They stood *under* the Mount. The tradition that the mountain was lifted over the people passed over into Islam.[21]

With this final example of exegesis we confirm our observation that Rabbinical ingenuity is a means of deducing from the sacred text that which the expositor wishes to find there.

[21] *Aboda Zara*, 2b, and *Quran*, 2: 60.

III

THE TRIUMPH OF ALLEGORY

UNDER the successors of Alexander, Greek language and Greek culture made their way into Egypt and the East. The Jews could not remain unaffected. The sharp conflict in the Maccabean period shows how near the Jewish religion came to extinction. The conflict ended in establishing the right of the Jew to live according to his own customs, but the all-pervading western influence made itself felt nevertheless. Jews were already settled in the Greek cities of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and the Jewish community outside Palestine was larger than that in the land which Israel thought to be peculiarly its own. The Jewish quarter of Alexandria had more inhabitants than Jerusalem, and in this centre of Greek culture no one, African or Semite, could escape acquaintance with Greek thought. The result on those studies of the ancestral Law to which the loyal Jew devoted himself can be imagined, and is attested by the documents which have come down to us. In the first place the Scriptures were made accessible in something like a Greek dress. At what date the so-called Septuagint translation was made we do not know, but it is clear that the greater part of the Old Testament was translated before the beginning of our era, and the part most important to the Jew — the Pentateuch — circulated in Alexandria as early as 150 B.C.

The version, as we see, adheres closely to the Hebrew original — so closely in fact that parts of it would scarcely be intelligible to one using the language which we call classic. But being made for the Jewish community which still thought more or less in Semitic forms, it would there be intelligible. The difficulty to the man educated in the school of Plato would be quite as much in the thought as in what we may call the

jargon. Anthropomorphism is writ large in the Hebrew Bible. The writers do not hesitate to say that God appeared in human form, that He ate and drank, that He had a local habitation, that He led his people to victory over their enemies, that He repented of things that He had done, that He became angry and was jealous. But to the Greek philosopher this would be strange, even repellent, for he thought of the Divinity as without body, parts, or passions. The educated Jew who attempted to hold fast to the ancestral religion, and who at the same time was trained to think in Greek forms, would find himself in a strait betwixt two. Fortunately for him a way of reconciliation had been pointed out to him by the Greeks themselves.

The problem which confronted him was not unlike the one which the Greek thinker had encountered in his own religion. Early religion clothed itself in myths, in Greece as elsewhere. Anthropomorphism was here in evidence, and in a form even cruder than among the Hebrews. But refinement had advanced to a point at which the crudeness and immorality of the stories of the gods shocked the more reflective, or the more sensitive, minds. The loves and hates, the quarrels and feastings, ascribed to the gods could not be true if taken literally. Yet the documents in which they were embodied had something of the sacred character which the Hebrew attached to his Bible. It may be an exaggeration to call Homer the Bible of the Greeks, and yet the reverence paid to his poems was only one remove from that with which the Jew regarded the Pentateuch. Antiquity has always, until our own iconoclastic age, carried weight, as is evidenced by the respect with which Plato, for example, mentions the Egyptians. It is plain that Greek thinkers argued in this way: The Egyptian nation is older than our own; the people must have learned more than we have, or even have drunk of the superior knowledge communicated to men in the golden age. Yet this wisdom is not openly revealed to us; there must be an esoteric teaching concealed in their mythology.

It was evident that the Egyptian mythology, in the forms in which it was current, was puerile enough. There was all the more reason to suppose that it presented enigmas which the thoughtful student could solve. Some confirmation may have been found in the fact that the Greek oracles gave their responses in obscure or figurative language. What the theory led to is made evident by Plutarch and he will serve as our example, although he lived somewhat later than the period with which we are immediately concerned. In his well-known tract on Isis and Osiris he takes an Egyptian myth as his subject. The myth relates that Osiris and Isis were brother and sister, and also husband and wife. Their half-brother Typhon slew Osiris and tore his body into sixteen pieces, whereupon Isis sought the pieces throughout the land of Egypt and put them together. After recounting the story, Plutarch expressly warns his readers that they must not suppose these things to have happened as they are related, but must interpret then symbolically. Just as the Greeks, he says, declare that Kronos is an allegorical symbol of time, Hera of air, and that the birth of Hephaistos is a picturesque representation of the transformation of air into fire, so also among the Egyptians are those who maintain that Osiris symbolizes the Nile, Isis the earth, and Typhon the sea into which the Nile falls to disappear and be scattered except such parts as have been abstracted by the earth to make her fruitful.

Be it noted that even if Osiris was originally the spirit of the Nile, or the Nile itself considered as a divinity, Plutarch had no knowledge of the fact. The story as it came to him was a myth pure and simple, abstracted from its naturalistic basis, if such it had, and his attempt to rationalize it was an effort to harmonize it with his own philosophy or theology. To his thought the Egyptian priests "concealed a philosophy in myths and narratives containing dim hints and suggestions of truth."[1] Another example is his treatment of the Egyptian worship of the crocodile. The crocodile he finds to be an apt symbol of the divinity, because alone of all animals it

[1] Oakesmith, *Religion of Plutarch* (1902), p. 190.

has no tongue — the divine word has no need of the organ of speech to make itself understood. Again, the Egyptians do not really name the dog Hermes (he has in mind the jackal, Anubis), but they bring the animal's watchfulness, untiringness, and intelligence into relation with the most intelligent of the gods.[2] The fact that the Egyptians make sun and moon (divinities) travel across the sky in boats is explained not by the obvious fact that, the Nile being the Egyptian highway, boats naturally suggested themselves to the imagination rather than chariots; but by the alleged dogma that water is the primal element from which sun and moon, like all other things, take their rise. The taboo of onions is made the occasion of the following explanation: "In the sacred customs there is nothing irrational, fabulous, or superstitious, as some imagine. Some are founded on ethical or utilitarian reasons, others are not without historical or scientific subtlety, as is the case with the onion. For that Diktus, the foster-child of Isis, when picking onions fell into the river and perished is unbelievable. The priests abhor and reject onions, because they grow and flourish only when the moon is waning. Moreover the use of the onion is good neither for those who fast nor for those who feast, in one case because it causes thirst, in the other because it induces weeping."[3] Similar reasons for the taboo of swine are given, but need not be reproduced here.

I have cited Plutarch because of the directness with which he asserts the validity of the allegorical method. But the method is earlier, as we gather from some allusions of Plato. It is not too bold to assume that when philosophy had advanced as far as it had when Socrates was questioning everybody about the nature of man and of virtue, there were already three types of thought developed. On the one side conservative minds held onto the myths which had come down from antiquity, and accepted them in their literal sense. To criticize these venerable stories seemed to them to undermine religion and the social order. At the other extreme were

[2] *Isis and Osiris*, 11. [3] *Ibid.*, 8.

the radicals, who would reject the traditions and with them religion itself. These said: It is not possible that the gods, if gods there be, should be pleased with festivals and sacrifices, with victims torn in pieces, fastings and loud lamentations, even foul language, shrieks and dishevelled hair. Xenophanes asserted that the poets attribute to the gods all that is shameful and blameworthy among men. The disciples of Pythagoras related that their master had been admitted to Hades before his death, and had there seen Hesiod chained to a brass pillar and gnashing his teeth in pain; Homer also hung on a tree and surrounded with serpents. This was the punishment of the poets for what they had said concerning the gods. Plato, as we know, would exclude the poets from his ideal commonwealth for the same reason.

Between the two parties were the allegorists. They could not believe that authors so venerable could mean to attribute to the divinities the actions which they related. The sages, they thought, in order to keep their wisdom from the common herd had concealed it under figurative narratives. Children, the unlearned, the frivolous, could find delight in the story as it was told, but men of mature understanding would discover the deeper meaning, even the laws which govern nature and mankind. The theory was encouraged by the fact that certain religious rites were observed in secrecy, and participated in only by the initiated. Allegory was used at least as early as the time of Anaxagoras, and by the date of Philo was well established. The thorough-going way in which the method was applied to Homer may be illustrated from a treatise on the subject which has come down to us and from which I quote:

"The battle in which the gods took part — Poseidon against Apollo, Hermes and Athene confronting Artemis and Ares — could not be reconciled with any elevated idea of the gods. What the poet designed was to give us a theory of physics. Poseidon represents the element of water, Apollo that of fire. These two are opposed to each other and the battle is a symbolical representation of this fact." [4]

[4] Heraclidis Pontici Allegoriæ Homeri, edidit Gale (*Opuscula Mythologica*, 1688).

According to another hypothesis, Apollo is the sun, his arrows are the sun's rays, Hera is the air, Hephaistos the fire, the god Scamander the river of that name. Athene is prudence opposed to Ares, unrestrained passion. When the poet tells us that Athene descended from heaven at Hera's command and restrained Achilles from attacking Agamemnon, he means that the prudent brain of the hero checked the anger rising in his breast.

One of the myths which gave the most offence was the one alluded to in the first book of the *Iliad,* where Achilles reminds his mother Thetis, a sea-nymph, how at one time Hera and Pallas Athene with the help of Poseidon overcame Zeus and bound him. From his humiliating situation he was released by Thetis, who called to her help the hundred-armed Briareus. Doubtless the poet took the myth as he found it, without inquiring for any deeper meaning. To him it was a picturesque and welcome embellishment of his narrative. But to later thinkers it was inconceivable that Zeus, chief of the gods and ruler of Olympus, should have suffered such an indignity. Hence the attempt to interpret it which found in it a picture of the conflict of the elements in nature. Poseidon, as we have seen, represents water, and Hera air; Zeus is now fire, and Athene earth. If fire prevailed over the other elements the world would be destroyed. Hence the other three conspire to hold it in check. They would, however, extinguish it altogether, did not Harmony (Thetis) call upon Force (Briareus) to restrain the three and free fire from its bonds.

How forced and unnatural, and, we may say, unpoetic also, this exposition is, needs hardly to be pointed out. Another example is the attempt to interpret the well-known story of Prometheus, chained to the Caucasus and tortured by a vulture which constantly devours his liver, which as constantly grows again. This lasts until the sufferer is delivered by Heracles. Diodorus gets rid of the improbabilities of the myth by supposing that Prometheus was governor of one of the provinces of Egypt. The Nile, violent as an eagle, broke through the dykes and devastated the country. Prometheus in despair

would have killed himself had not Heracles repaired the dykes and driven the river back to its bed. Thus the historian removed the myth, and the poetry also.

The logical necessity of giving a symbolical interpretation to a sacred literature when its literal sense no longer meets the needs of its readers is thus illustrated in the history of Greek thought. The line between symbol, type, and allegory, is not always easy to draw. In its actual application the word type designates something which points forward to the future. The allegory is usually a narrative whose real meaning is not that which appears on the surface. Bunyan's great work might be read by a child as the story of a man who travelled through the world and met various adventures. In the author's intent the experiences are those of the human soul, and the adventures are its trials and temptations. Our concern here is with the application of the method to the Hebrew Scriptures. In fact it is used by the later Biblical authors. Thus the author of Daniel tells us of the four beasts he saw in a vision and of their combats. The interpretation which he receives shows that the history of the four world-empires is represented in this way. The same writer interprets Jeremiah allegorically, we may say, when he makes the prophet's seventy years mean seventy periods of seven years each. In the book of Enoch we have an extended allegory in the animal vision. The history of the world down to the author's own time is here recounted, only the human characters are represented by bulls, sheep and various ravenous beasts. The prevalence of picturesque embodiments of religious ideas in both the Greek and the Jewish community naturally led to the application of the method to the Old Testament.

The man who did this most thoroughly was Philo of Alexandria, whose life began a little before our era and extended well into the first century. That he was a loyal Jew admits of no doubt. He seems to have had no adequate knowledge of Hebrew, but was familiar with the Greek version, to which he ascribed the authority which the original possessed for the Palestinian schools. He repeatedly emphasizes the priestly

character of the Hebrew people, a people called by God to be priest and prophet for the whole human race, to pray and sacrifice for all men. The Mosaic Tora he regards as of perpetual obligation. Moses is to him the only lawgiver whose laws remain permanent, unchanged, and unshaken, as though sealed by nature. Moses "combined in his person the qualities of king and philosopher not only, but also those of lawgiver, chief priest and prophet."[5] He was inspired in the fullest sense of the word, and his laws are really divine. Holding these opinions Philo was yet thoroughly educated in the Greek learning of his time. He was prepared to mediate between two apparently opposed types of thought, not only by the allegorical method already in vogue, but by the Platonic view of inspiration. According to this "no man when in his wits attains prophetic truth and inspiration; but when he receives the inspired word either his intelligence is enthralled in sleep or he is demented by some distemper or possession. . . . And for this reason it is customary to appoint interpreters to be judges of true inspiration. Some call them prophets, quite unaware that they are not to be called prophets at all, but only interpreters of prophecy."[6] Since according to the Hebrew view also the prophet may be so "possessed" by the Spirit as to be beside himself — though this is not affirmed of the prophets whose books are included in the Canon — here was common ground. We may in fact say that Philo regarded himself as the interpreter of the divine oracles, such an one as Plato has in mind.

The task of reconciling the facts with the theory was not easy. Two problems presented themselves. The Hebrew Scriptures, that is the Pentateuch, to which Philo gives almost all his attention, contain a law, a rule of life with many specific injunctions for daily conduct. To justify these in a community which observed other customs came first. In the second place the Hebrew affirmations concerning God, anthropomorphic as we have seen, must be reconciled with the

[5] *De Vita Mosis*, II, 2f.

[6] Plato, *Timæus*, 494 (Jowett's translation).

Platonic theology, according to which the divinity is removed from the material world. Philo, like Plato, is sure that God exists. But His true nature is so far above our own that He is really incomprehensible. Fortunately for Philo the earlier thinkers had posited a mediating being, the Logos. At the very outset of his discussions of the Law we find him having recourse to this hypothesis. The text says that man was made in the image of God. To Philo this cannot be true in the natural or material sense. The difficulty is overcome by supposing that man was actually made in the image of the mediating Logos. Even then the image is not corporeal but in the soul. The same difficulty occurred to the Rabbis, for they affirmed that what was meant was that man was made in the image of an angel.[7] Similarly, the ideas which play so large a part in the theology of Plato are welcome to Philo. He affirms that at the creation first an incorporeal heaven and earth were made, and the *idea* of air and space, followed by the incorporeal substance of water.[8] The way had been opened for such a statement by the author of Proverbs, to whom Wisdom is already a demiurge, active in the work of creation.

Philo nowhere denies the historicity of the narrative given in the sacred book, but his interest is altogether in the spiritual application. In fact he is a teacher of ethics and it is not unreasonable to suppose that his works represent the kind of sermon he was accustomed to preach to the cultivated Jews of Alexandria. Examples meet us on every page. Eden is to him the divine garden in which all the plants are gifted with reason and soul, for the fruits they bear are the virtues. The three Patriachs are types of Stoic ideals — Abraham, the man who learns virtue; Isaac, the one born virtuous; Jacob, the one who attains virtue by exercise. Enoch, Noah, and Enosh form a similar triad. The altar is the thankful soul of the wise man, compacted of perfect, uninjured, and undivided virtues — the altar it will be remembered is to be built of *unhewn* stones.

[7] *Bereschith Rabba* p. 96. How far Philo's speculations have influenced Christian dogmatic teaching it is not now our purpose to inquire.

[8] *De Opificio Mundi*, 29, cf. 36 and 129.

On it burns the inextinguishable flame of wisdom, for wisdom is the light of the soul. According to the literal meaning of Scripture Abraham's migrations were made by a wise man, but according to the rules of allegory by the virtue-loving and God-seeking soul. The king of Egypt in the Joseph story is the human spirit, his officers are bread, dainties, and drink. These are eunuchs because the voluptuary devoted to them is unable to beget reflection, self-control, or any virtue. Isaac sacrificed by his father represents cheerfulness of soul (his name means *Laughter*) which the wise man sacrifices to God. The four kings who came against Sodom are desire, concupiscence, fear and melancholy. The five who resist them are the five senses. The four affections rule over the senses, but when age comes the senses can no longer pay tribute to the affections — the eyes become dim, the ears dull, and so with the others. But the wise man drives away the affections as Abraham conquered the invading kings, for when reason arms itself with the virtues and with the maxims of wise conduct it overcomes the desires and appetites.

Most far-fetched from our point of view is the interpretation of the garments of the Highpriest as a symbol of the universe. His tunic of blue which reaches from his neck to his feet represents the atmosphere, which also is blue and reaches from the heights to the depths. Over this is the breastplate, which has on the shoulders two jewels hemispherical in form; the two jewels are the two hemispheres of the sky, and the twelve precious stones on the breast are the twelve signs of the Zodiac. They are in four rows to represent the four seasons of the year. The whole is called in the Greek version *Logeion,* the *Reasonable,* because everything in heaven is arranged according to reason, and mathematics. In connection with the breastplate the lawgiver ordered the Revelation and Truth (Urim and Thummim). By Truth he indicates that falsehood cannot enter heaven, that in fact it is banished to earth and dwells in the soul of wicked men; by Revelation he indicates that the heavenly bodies reveal to us events of earth which are in themselves unintelligible.

These examples sufficiently show how the theology of the Greeks was read into the Hebrew Book. The other problem — the justification of the observance of the Law in all its details, was quite as urgent and perhaps more difficult. The peculiar social customs of the Jews, especially their segregation from their gentile neighbors, had early attracted the attention, and also the ridicule, of these same gentiles. Their refusal to eat many of the things which men of other faiths found both nutritious and enjoyable was a constant cause of remark. But to Philo, as we have seen, all the regulations of the Law were of divine origin, and however they might be spiritualized they must be obeyed in their literal sense. Not only was Moses inspired in the fullest meaning of the word, but the Law was the law of nature. Abraham obeyed the commands of God, not only those made known in word and writing, but also those revealed by nature in distinct signs; for he who considers the order which rules in nature learns to live a life conformed to the Law (the Hebrew Law is undoubtedly meant).[9] Naturally the author is glad when he finds support for his theory in the customs of other nations, — the Sabbath for example, the universal festival and birthday of the world, is thought to be confirmed by the fact that in Greece the seventh day of every month is consecrated to Apollo. The sacredness of the number seven was in fact widely recognized by gentiles as well as Jews, and with this as a starting point Philo was able to introduce Pythagorean speculation concerning numbers into his system.

Evidence of a desire to justify those parts of the Law which to the gentile seemed irrational, is given by Philo in his discussion of clean and unclean fish, flesh, and fowl. He was not alone in this desire, as is evidenced by a pseudepigraphic book which was apparently written by a contemporary of his. It is a sample of a considerable literature by which in this period the Jews sought to conciliate their gentile neighbors. This book is the Letter of Aristeas, in which a Jew poses as a Greek officer at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

[9] *De Abrahamo*, XIII.

In this disguise he gives an account of the origin of the Greek version of the Law, and takes occasion, not only to magnify the merits of that work, but to glorify the Jewish Temple and the Jewish religion as well. What now interests us is his explanation of the Mosaic law of meats. Writing to an alleged brother officer, he gives us the following:

> You must not fall into the degrading notion that it was out of regard to mice and weasels that Moses drew up his Law with such exceeding care. All these ordinances were made for the sake of righteousness, to aid the quest for virtue and the perfecting of character. For all the birds we use are tame and distinguished by cleanliness, feeding on various kinds of grain and pulse, such as pigeons, turtle doves, locusts, partridges, geese also and birds of this class. But the birds that are forbidden you will find to be wild and carnivorous, tyrannizing over others. . . . And so by naming them unclean he (Moses) gave a sign by means of them that those for whom the Law was ordained must practice righteousness in their hearts and not tyrannize over others. . . . Wherefore all the rules he has laid down . . . are enacted with the object of teaching us a moral lesson. For the division of the hoof and the separation of the claws are intended to teach us that we must *discriminate* between our actions, with a view to the practice of virtue. . . . All animals which are cloven-footed and chew the cud represent to the initiated the symbol of memory. For the act of chewing the cud is nothing else than meditating on life and existence."[10]

The citation is only one evidence of the prevalence of the allegorical method in this period. The book of Wisdom, like Philo, allegorizes the robe of the Highpriest, affirming that in the long garment was the whole world (xviii:24), and Josephus takes the Mosaic tabernacle to be symbolical, its three divisions corresponding to the three divisions — sea, land, and sky. The twelve loaves of Shewbread indicate the months of the year, and the seven lamps of the candelabrum are the seven planets. The materials of the curtains are significant as well as the garments of the Highpriest.[11] In this company of expositors, however, Philo was easily the chief, because of the thoroughness with which he carried out the principle. For this reason his influence on Christian scholars is of the first importance. The Christians brought

[10] Epistle of Aristeas, 145–154, translated in Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (1913), II, p. 108.

[11] *Antiquities*, III, 7.

their sacred Book with them from Judaism, but their purpose in studying it was not the same which we have found among the Jews. They believed the Law *as law* to be no longer binding. But *as prediction* it was important. With the faith that this was the main purpose of the sacred oracles they scrutinized every passage for adumbrations of the Christ. That the allegorical method gave them welcome help needs no demonstration. To a moderate extent it is discoverable in the New Testament. In the rock which, according to Rabbinical exegesis, followed the Israelites in their wanderings Paul finds a type of Christ, and the Apostle asserts in so many words that the story of Hagar and Sarah is an allegory of the two dispensations, Jewish and Christian. More thorough-going is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. By an elaborate argument he proves that Jesus, though not of priestly stock, was yet the true Highpriest, antitype of the one described in the Pentateuch, and that he was in fact specifically predicted by the Psalmist who brings him into the line of Melchizedek. The sacrifices of the Old Testament are therefore only shadows of the true sacrifice, that by which Jesus offered himself to God. The way to this apprehension had been already opened by the theory, made known to us by Josephus, that the tabernacle erected by Moses was a copy of the universe. The true Holy of Holies was therefore the heaven where God resides, and the Highpriest's entrance into the earthly sanctuary was an allegorical foreshadowing of Jesus' return to his heavenly Father. This has become so fully a part of Christian tradition that we do not readily see how startling it must have been to the strict Jew; for to him the sacrificial system was the appointed way of serving God, and was intended to be perpetual. On the other hand it undoubtedly gave relief to those believers who had a wider view, and who were already reconciling themselves to the fact that the destruction of the temple made the sacrifices no longer possible.

The allegorical system thus introduced to the Church became the recognized method of dealing with the older Scrip-

tures. Justin Martyr, for example, denies that the literal sense of the Old Testament is valid; otherwise polygamy would be lawful. The cases where the Patriarchs are said to have more wives than one are intended to be interpreted allegorically. His exegesis enables him to find Christ where we should hesitate to look for him. He sees in the two goats which are brought into the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, types of the two advents of Christ. An Old Testament poet describes Judah as one who washes his garments in wine (Gen. xlix:11). To Justin this means that Jesus purifies his people by his blood.[12] The Paschal lamb when prepared for roasting is pierced by two skewers at right angles with each other. This is taken to be a type of the cross on which Jesus suffered — naturally, we may say, for Paul had already called Christ our Passover. Jacob served Laban for sheep; so Jesus became a servant that he might purchase his flock. The ass and its foal used by Jesus at his triumphal entry into Jerusalem are symbols, one of the Jews under the yoke of the Law, the other of gentile Christians freed from it.[13]

That the sacrifices of the Old Testament point forward to Christ is a commonplace of these writers. But it is somewhat surprising to find the one which from its sex we should suppose least typical applied in detail as it is by Barnabas. This is the sacrifice of a red heifer, and the use of its ashes to purify those unclean from contact with a dead body. The application deserves quotation and is as follows:

> But what think you means the type where the commandment is given to Israel that those men whose sins are full-grown offer a heifer and slaughter and burn it, and that then children[14] take up the ashes and cast them into vessels and twist the scarlet wool on a tree (see here again is a type of the cross and the scarlet wool) and the hyssop, and that, this done, the children should sprinkle the people one by one that they may be purified from their

[12] *Dialogue with Trypho,* 54:1.

[13] The examples are from the Dialogue with Trypho, and I have not attempted to distinguish between allegory, type, and symbol. Further citations may be found in Fullerton, *Prophecy and Authority* (1919), a valuable discussion of the attitude of Christian expositors towards the Old Testament. The application of allegory to the New Testament is not here entered upon.

[14] The children are not in the text, and must be taken from oral tradition.

sins? Understand how in all plainness it is spoken to you. The calf[15] is Jesus; the men that offer it, being sinners are they that offered him for slaughter. . . . The children who sprinkle are they who preach to us the forgiveness of sins and purity of heart, they to whom he gave power to preach the Gospel; and they are twelve as a testimony to the tribes, because there are twelve tribes of Israel. But wherefore are the children who sprinkle three? For a testimony to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because these three are mighty before God. And why the wool on the wood? Because the kingdom of Jesus is on the wood,[16] and because they who hope in him shall live forever. And why wool and hyssop at the same time? Because in his kingdom there shall be evil and foul days in which we shall be saved; for he who suffers in the flesh is healed by the foulness of hyssop.[17]

The same author finds significance in the number of Abraham's servants (318). By a play on the numerical significance of the letters, quite similar to what we have found among the Rabbis, he finds that they point to the cross and to the name of Jesus.[18] This interpretation of the mystical number passed over to the Fathers and recurs in Clement of Alexandria, Ambrose, Augustine and later. With reference to the animals forbidden for food, Barnabas follows the line marked out by Aristeas, but is more elaborate. According to him swine are prohibited because they are ungrateful, crying out for food when hungry, but silent when satisfied. The rule against birds of prey is to teach us to avoid robbers and violent men. Certain fish which lurk in the depths are types of wicked men who work in concealment. The hare and hyena are lascivious, according to popular natural history, and are to be avoided on this account. "Concerning meats then Moses received three decrees and uttered them in the spiritual sense. But they (the Jews) accepted them according to the lust of the flesh, as though they referred to eating. But David received knowledge of the same three decrees and says: "Blessed is the man who has not gone in the counsel of the ungodly — as the fishes go in the darkness into the depths; and has not stood in the way of sinners — like those

[15] It has changed its gender to meet the exigency of the interpretation.
[16] Allusion to the cross.
[17] *Epistle of Barnabas,* VIII.
[18] *Ibid.,* IX, 8.

who pretend to fear the Lord, but sin like swine; and has not sat in the seat of the scorners — like the birds who sit and watch for prey." After this we are not surprised to learn that Moses holding up his hands in the battle with Amalek is a type of Jesus on the cross, and that the declaration of God: "All the day long have I held out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people," is directly prophetic of the crucified Christ.

We should err if we emphasized these passages in such a way as to shut out of view many others in which the text of Scripture is rationally treated. There is no reason to doubt that in this period the greater part of the Bible was accepted in its natural sense. But this refers especially to the New Testament. The Gospels were studied as containing the correct account of the life and death of Jesus, and the ethical portions of the Old Testament were helpful for right living. The teachers of the Church were in fact more moderate in the use of allegory than were the Gnostics. From the account of these sectaries which Irenaeus gives, we see how easy it was by allegory to make the Scriptures teach heresy instead of orthodox doctrine. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that the Gnostics gave the perfect example of the use of allegory, showing how to discover preconceived opinions in documents whose literal meaning was not acceptable to the expositor. The Gnostic system attempted to combine elements drawn from Greek mythology, oriental speculation, and various mystic doctrines which were current in the Roman world. Its leaders were impressed by the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and found themselves obliged to take some position with reference to them. The allegorical method was a tool which they found ready to their hand. We learn from Irenaeus that they interpreted the thirty years of Jesus' life as types of the thirty Aeons posited by their system. An alleged failure on the part of the eighth Aeon was foreshadowed by Judas' betrayal of his Master. The healing of the woman who had an issue of blood, however, showed the recovery of this same Aeon. The thirty

are divided into two groups, one of twelve, the other of eighteen members. The first group corresponds to the twelve years of Jesus' age when he disputed with the doctors in the temple, also to the number of the Apostles. The second group is indicated by the eighteen months of Jesus' sojourn after his resurrection. The chief Tetrad is mentioned in the first verse of Genesis, God, Beginning, Heaven, Earth. It is indictated by the *fourth* day, on which the sun was created, by the fourfold material of which the Tabernacle was constructed, and by the four rows of precious stones on the Highpriest's breastplate—" and if there are other things in Scripture which can be dragged into the number four, they declare that these had their being with reference to the Tetrad." Similarly the Ogdoad is foreshadowed by the eight persons saved in the ark, by the eighth day, on which circumcision is performed, and by David's being the eighth son. This sort of play on numbers is already familiar and we need not multiply examples.

What is significant is that the Gnostics instead of rejecting the idea of revelation extended it so as to include their own cosmological speculations, as well as the traditions and myths of other religions. Allegory enabled them to overcome the discrepancies of these various elements, and they applied it thoroughly to the New Testament. Jesus is the Redeemer, because he is the supreme revealer of the mysteries, knowledge of which brings salvation. On this all the various sects could unite. But with reference to the Old Testament differences soon arose. Since knowledge brings salvation, or is salvation, the serpent which brought man the knowledge of good and evil must be regarded as a benefactor. He was so regarded by the Ophites, who found support for their view in the brazen serpent made by Moses. This sharp contradiction to the Hebrew view was carried further by the Cainites, who honored Cain, Esau, Korah, and others just because they opposed the Old Testament heroes. Marcion was logical in that he rejected the whole Old Testament. His ground was objection to the anthropomorphisms, for which he could

account only by supposing that the God revealed by the Hebrew writers was not the one made known by Jesus. He even believed that the sinners of the Old Testament record were delivered from Hades by Jesus, whereas the Patriarchs were left in limbo.

The debate with the Gnostics should have taught the Fathers the danger of allegory. A method which lent itself to speculations so diverse could hardly be relied upon to demonstrate what the Christians had most at heart. But it was not easy to discard the interpretation which many thinkers had already attached to Old Testament passages. What Irenaeus did was to look around for some check to heretical exposition. This he found in the Apostolic tradition. His word is: "The true Gnosis is the teaching of the Apostles and the doctrine of the Church for the whole world. The body of Christ is known in the succession of Bishops whom the Apostles gave to the Church." This of course made tradition and not Scripture the authority, and it did not diminish confidence in allegory. Irenaeus is himself the proof. Although he valued the literal sense and refused to allegorize passages which he regarded as directly Messianic, he does on occasion make use of the method. Elisha's miracle with the axe, for example, is made to show that the sure word of God which we had negligently lost by means of a tree, and were not in the way of finding again, we should receive again by the dispensation of a tree (the cross). He believed that 'the treasure hid in a field,' of the Gospel parable meant Jesus hidden in the Old Testament. He found the resurrection of Christ predicted in the Psalm (lxxxv: 11): "Truth is sprung out of the earth." He compares the four Evangelists to the four Cherubim of the Old Testament, and finds the calling of the gentiles announced in Noah's blessing on Shem (Gen. ix:27). Moses' Ethiopian wife is a type of the gentile Church, chosen by Christ; and Lot's daughters foreshadow the two Churches (Jewish and gentile). Lot's wife, left behind by her husband and turned into a pillar of salt, prefigures the Church left on the earth by Jesus but still the incorruptible salt of man-

kind. It is unnecessary to multiply examples.[19] Some of those cited were already current tradition, and as we shall see became stock examples throughout the whole history of theology. The underlying theory is that the Son of God is the revealer who appeared to the Old Testament saints, spoke to Noah, was Abraham's guest, pronounced judgment on Sodom, and directed Jacob on his journey. Christians are the true Israel, the seed of Abraham by faith, as had been in fact affirmed by Paul. To enter into the history of Messianic prophecy as thus developed, helped no doubt by the Greek rendering of the name Yahweh by *Lord,* is beyond the scope of the present essay.[20]

Since every Christian writer gave some attention to the Old Testament, and the difference between them was not one of method, but simply of the degree to which the method was applied, it would be burdensome to attempt a complete survey of their activity. Some attention, however, should be given to the school of Alexandria, where we may say allegory came to full flower. Since Philo had lived there and since he was regarded as almost a Christian, if not in fact a disciple of the Apostles, it is not surprising that his method was there thoroughly carried out. Clement of Alexandria frankly adopted it, and his assertion that Plato borrowed from Moses simply put into Christian literature a belief already cherished in Jewish circles. His explanation of the reason for the Mosaic prohibitions of certain foods is borrowed from Aristeas, turning it against the Jews, however, and asserting that those animals which chew the cud without dividing the hoof signify the Jews, who have the oracles of God in their mouth but have not the firm footing of faith.[21] He claims for his ecclesiastical gnosis that it is the tradition of the Church, and even that it is esoteric teaching communicated by Christ

[19] All that I have given are taken from the treatise "Against Heresies" translated in the Antenicene Christian Library.

[20] The early Christian argument from the Old Testament is discussed by Ungern-Sternberg in *Theologische Studien Theodor Zahn zum* 10 *Oktober* 1908 *dargebracht* (1908).

[21] *Stromateis,* VII, 18.

after his resurrection. He says that for many reasons the Scriptures conceal their meaning "primarily with the aim of making us diligent and unresting in our study of the words of salvation. . . . For this reason the sacred mysteries of prophecy are veiled in parables and so reserved for chosen men, and for those who are selected for higher knowledge." On this theory the way is open for allegory and we find its application in such assertions as that the land of Egypt and the people of Canaan are types of passions and vices, and that when it is said: "The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea," the real meaning is that the impulsive passions bring man's nature into the turbulent waves of worldly disorder.[22]

The culmination of the allegorical method is universally acknowledged to be found in the works of Origen. Undoubtedly the impression made by emphasizing this element of his teaching is unjust to the greatest scholar of the ancient Church. Before dwelling on the allegories we should bear in mind that, in the words of Bishop Lightfoot, "in spite of very patent faults which it costs nothing to denounce, a very considerable part of what is valuable in subsequent commentaries, whether ancient or modern, is due to him. A deep thinker, an accurate grammarian, a most laborious worker and a most earnest Christian, he not only laid the foundation, but to a very great extent built up the fabric, of Biblical interpretation."[23] This is of course especially true of his work on the New Testament. In expounding the Old Testament he was thoroughly under the influence of Philo. His debate with the Gnostics seems to have made him cling even more closely to allegory, if we may trust the statement that he borrowed from Heracleon's thoroughly allegorical commentary on the Gospel of John, in which for example the story of the Samaritan woman was interpreted as a drama of the creation.[24] With reference to the Old Testament he has no hesitation in confessing that the literal meaning is often

[22] Tollinton, *Clement of Alexandria* (1914), II, pp. 302 and 213.
[23] *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 375.
[24] E. de Faye, *Gnostiques et Gnosticisme* (1913), pp. 57 and 62.

obscure, or absurd, or unworthy of a divine author. The Jewish Law *as law* is inferior to the laws of other nations.[25] We must therefore search for an underlying spiritual sense. As the body has little worth, when compared with the spirit, so the literal sense is inferior to the spiritual. This he finds intimated in Scripture itself. In the Levitical law we read that the meal-offering may be baked in an oven, or fried in a pan, or toasted on a plate (Lev. ii:4–7). We cannot suppose that God cares for such trifles. What the text intimates is that the meal which is offered is the Scripture itself; the oven in which it is prepared is the heart of man; and since the passage specifies an oven and a plate and a pan, the meaning is that Scripture has a three-fold sense. Similarly the flaying of the sacrifice by the priest is intended to teach us that we must strip off the external husk of Scripture in order to discover the nourishment which it conceals. Thus allegory is made to justify the allegorical method.

On the Christian principle the divine and spiritual in the Old Testament came to light with the advent of Jesus. The reason why the Jews do not believe is because they look only at the literal sense and do not see the spiritual side. Certain stumbling blocks in Scripture are a part of the divine plan "so that we may not be borne hither and thither by the mere attractiveness of the style, and thus either forsake the doctrinal part because we receive no instruction worthy of God, or else cleave to the letter and learn nothing more divine."[26] Here is an example of his application of the method. In Exodus i:4 we read: Joseph died and his brothers, and the children of Israel multiplied exceedingly. The comment is: If Joseph dies in thee, that is if thou receive into thyself the death of

[25] Contrast with this frank confession the statement of a twentieth century theologian: "They (the Scriptures) are free from the puerilities and especially from the abominations of the world-religions, because they were written by 'holy men of God who spake' not out of their own divinely created and sustained and directed religious nature even, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

[26] *Philocalia,* translated by Lewis (1911), p. 17. Cf. the strong expressions about the unreason of some laws and the impossibility of obeying others, p. 21.

Christ, then the children of Israel, that is the spiritual graces, will be multiplied in thee. Further confirmation of the theory of a threefold sense is found in Plato's psychology, according to which man consists of body, soul, and spirit; so Scripture has a triple sense, literal, moral, and spiritual. This he finds confirmed by Prov. xxii:21, which in the Greek version reads: Have I not written unto thee *triply*, in counsel and knowledge? The homily on Genesis 1 discovers the waters above the firmament to be the spiritual nature, the firmament itself our bodily substance, and the waters below are the sins and vices which we should separate from ourselves. The story of Noah teaches us that when evils rise like a flood, if one turns and hears the Word of God he constructs an ark of safety within himself. Rebecca coming to the well daily to draw water and being found there by Abraham's servant, thus to be betrothed to Isaac, is a lesson — we should come daily to the wells of Scripture, since Christ wishes us for his bride. These examples are taken from homilies, and perhaps, like other preachers, the Father felt at liberty to use his imagination in a way to edify his hearers. We have found something of the kind in Philo. Yet the genuinely exegetical works of Origen sufficiently show his principles. From the book of Wisdom he takes the explanation of the Highpriest's garments which we have already considered, and he finds confirmation of his method in the declaration of Isaiah that to his hearers all vision has become like a sealed book. This he extends to cover all Scripture, which he finds to be full of riddles and parables and other obscurities, hard to be understood by men whose ears catch no more than faint echoes of the divine World.[27]

The method did not prevail without protest, and Origen himself alludes to some objectors. So far as these were heretics, he was of course prejudiced against them from the first. The Gnostics as we have seen allegorized the New Testament in such a way as to do away with the historic ground for the Christian faith. On the other hand by taking

[27] *Philocalia* (translated by Lewis), p. 31.

the Old Testament literally they found reason for rejecting it, or for reversing the Christian judgment concerning its heroes and villains. On both counts they would be antipathetic to Origen. The precarious nature of the allegorical argument from the Old Testament was evident to the author of the Clementine Recognitions also, which plainly assert that there are many things in Scripture which can be drawn to that sense which every one has preconceived for himself. This, the author affirms, ought not to be done, and he bases his argument on the literal sense, although he allows a certain force to tradition.[28] The Clementine documents, however, lie outside the main stream of Christian literature, and this protest, if such it was, had no appreciable effect. An interesting anticipation of later views is found in their statement that animal sacrifice was ordained by accommodation; the people being accustomed to it in Egypt could not have been induced to break with it at once.[29] This indication that the author did not allegorize the Old Testament may be brought into contrast with Origen's argument that if we insist on the literal sense we must continue to sacrifice animals. He is therefore driven to the conclusion that while all Scripture has the mystical sense, not all of it has the literal meaning. This he confirms by the New Testament verse which speaks of the water-pots containing two or three firkins apiece, for the purifying of the Jews. "The expression darkly intimates that those who are called Jews secretly are to be purified by the word of Scripture, receiving sometimes two firkins, that is the physical and spiritual sense, sometimes three firkins, since some have also the corporeal, that is, the literal sense."[30] The examples might be multiplied but enough has been said to verify Professor Fullerton's remark that Origen attempted to give the method of allegory scientific elaboration. At the same time he too recognized the need of some check to the imagination of the expositor and he found this, as

[28] Recognitions of Clement, X, 42 (*Antenicene Fathers*, Volume VIII, p. 203).

[29] *Ibid.*, I, 36 (p. 87).

[30] *De Principiis*, IV, 1, 12.

Irenaeus did, in the tradition received in the Church. The spiritual sense, he says, belongs to the *praedicatio apostolica manifeste tradita.*[31] This loyalty to tradition did not prevent his being regarded with suspicion at a later time.

Philo, Origen and Plutarch certainly attest the allegorical method as something which met the needs of Jew, Christian, and Greek. It was not due to the influence of any one man, and having established itself its use in the Church was almost a matter of course. In the Western Church the outstanding figure is Augustine, and his position is made clear by his own statement: "I often rejoiced to hear Ambrose say: The letter kills, the Spirit gives life, for that which in its literal sense seemed absurd he expounded spiritually, lifting from it the veil of secrecy." Ambrose, as we know, was a practical administrator rather than a competent expounder of Scripture, and what he gave was drawn from others. A large number of parallels have been pointed out between his expositions and those of Philo.[32] It is not likely, however, that he usually borrowed directly from the Jewish author, for he was acquainted with the works of Clement and Origen, and is thought to have taken material from Hippolytus and Basil. That neither he nor Augustine knew any Hebrew need not be urged against them, although it is to us somewhat strange that the greatest of the Fathers should have scruples against Jerome's more accurate version of the Old Testament based on the Hebrew text. His attitude is one more evidence of the strength of tradition.

With reference to Scripture, however, the fundamental principle is that whatever in the divine Word does not, when taken in the literal sense, contribute to morality of life or rightness of belief, must be taken allegorically, since the Scriptures, being the Word of God, can have nothing superfluous or unconsidered.

[31] *De Principiis,* Preface, §2.

[32] Siegfried, *Philo von Alexandria als Ausleger des Alten Testaments* (1875), pp. 372–390. Siegfried's Book is still the most thorough discussion of Philo's exegesis that we have.

To Augustine, as it seems, we owe the first clear declaration that each passage of Scripture has a four-fold sense. These are: the literal, the allegorical, the moral, and the anagogic. Thus the word Jerusalem is in the literal sense a city in Palestine; allegorically it designates the Church; morally it may mean the order of civil society; whereas anagogically it points to eternal life. Yet it is fair to say that Augustine's historical sense is superior to that of many of the Fathers, as is shown by his great work on the City of God. In it he attempts to construct a history of the world on the basis of the literal sense of the Biblical narrative. His two commonwealths — cities, according to the Roman conception — are the earthly and the heavenly. Cain, the first murderer, is the head of the earthly, Abel represents the other. In the family of Abraham, Ishmael, child of the flesh and of the bondwoman, carries on the one line, Isaac, the other: "Fitly, therefore, does Isaac typify the children of grace, citizens of the free city who dwell together in everlasting peace, in which self-love and self-will have no place, but a ministering love that rejoices in the common joy of all, of many hearts made one, that secures perfect concord." This sentence shows as well as any that although he desired to construct an historical narrative, the author was yet dominated by a theory. And it does not surprise us that to carry out the theory he must have recourse to allegory. For many parts of the Old Testament, if interpreted literally, would have slight bearing on the theme.

Examples are not hard to find. The sons of Abraham by Ketura are said to have received gifts from their father. This means that the Jews and heretics, carnally minded, receive the ordinary gifts of God's providence, whereas Isaac, who is heir of the promise, represents the Church. The Church again is really meant by the verse which praises the bride in Canticles: "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are shorn, which came up from the washing, whereof every one bears twins and none is barren among them." Holy men are the teeth of the Church, tearing men away from their errors and bringing them into the body of the Church with all their

harshness softened down. Where it is said that the elder (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob) the Scripture means that the Jewish will serve the gentile Church. It is an unworthy solicitude in Jacob when he directs the disposition of his dead body. The dead body is therefore sin, and its burial signifies forgiveness. The recurrence of certain words is thought to be significant. Thus the word 'remnants' in Gen. xlv:7 points to Romans xi:5, where we find the 'remnant' spoken of. Hence there is a *mysterium*. In the Tabernacle the Holy of Holies means the New Testament, the anteroom is the Old Testament.[33]

As in other cases, we must beware of the impression that the allegory was the leading thought of the theologian. The intense earnestness of Augustine in inculcating a Christian life of love and self-denial must impress every one who reads his works. "Whoever thinks that he understands Scripture or any part of it, but puts such an interpretation on it as does not tend to build up the two-fold love, does not understand it as he ought." He even goes so far as to say that the interpretation which builds us up in love even if faulty is not pernicious. Along with the inspiration of Scripture there was the equally important inspiration of the Church. This it was which settled the Canon of Scripture: "With regard to the canonical Scripture we must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic Churches, especially such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an Apostle and to receive epistles." Scripture, therefore, asserts nothing but the catholic faith in regard to things past, present, and future. With this principle we see how inevitable was the use of allegory in the study of the Old Testament.

By common consent Augustine is the most influential thinker for Western Christianity between St. Paul and Luther. With his endorsement allegory may fairly be said to have triumphed.

[33] The examples are taken from the treatise *De doctrina Christiana,* and the *Questiones in Heptateuchum.*

IV

SCHOLASTICISM DOMINANT

THERE is no contradiction in speaking of allegory as triumphant and then of scholasticism as dominant. Allegory was the method of exposition which had established itself in the Church's treatment of the Old Testament, and even to a considerable extent in its treatment of the New Testament. Scholasticism is the system of thought which used allegory as its tool. In the earlier period the question discussed between Jews and Christians was whether Jesus was the expected Messiah. The Old Testament was viewed as a conglomerate of predictions, and where they, when literally construed, appeared to be something quite different, allegory was used to make the verses or the incidents point forward to Christ. But by the time of Augustine Messianism was taken for granted. This Father had a much larger conception, namely that of a divinely established commonwealth, the City of God, which it was easy to identify with the Church. Here was a visible organization, having the sacraments in its charge, and the successor of St. Peter at its head. It had its sacred Book which Jerome had put into intelligible, almost classic, Latin. The whole stream of Christian tradition affirmed that what was patent in the New Testament was latent in the Old Testament.

But an organized body, such as the Church had become, was confronted with a multitude of questions to which the simple congregations of earlier days were strangers. These problems became acute when western society seemed to be breaking up in the storms of barbarian invasion. Men clung to the organization which gave the promise of civil order, all

the more that it claimed divine sanction. But the New Testament gave little light on questions of discipline, whereas the Old Testament presented a picture of an ecclesiastical commonwealth, completely organized from top to bottom. The ideal presented in the middle books of the Pentateuch was regarded as the divinely revealed pattern of what the City of God should be. In fact the authors, or compilers, of that code were wholly possessed by the ritual idea. According to this idea God was to take up his residence on earth in some visible form — His Shekina, or His Name; and the nation of Israel was to be organized so as to serve Him in the most perfect manner. In the strictest sense of the word Israel was to be a priestly nation. Something of a sacred character will then inhere in every member of the community. But this sacred character is intensified in the servants of the sanctuary, one grade higher in each of the classes — Levites, Singers, Priests, and Highpriest. The necessity of preserving the sacred community from contamination required discipline, and the frequent threat that any transgression of the sacred Law would be followed by excommunication, or death, showed the severity visited upon sinners or scoffers.

In the Church from the time of Cyprian, the requirement of obedience to the duly consecrated bishop was emphasized, and the orders of Christian ministers were more and more assimilated to those of the Hebrew priesthood. In the one case there were bishops, priests, and deacons as in the other there were Levites, priests, and Highpriest. The equation of Pope and Highpriest naturally followed. The enemies of the Church were identified with the Canaanites and idolaters, and the severity of Deuteronomy was quoted as authority for their extermination. Even Augustine found in the Old Testament justification for compulsion in matters of faith. On the ritual side the idea of sacrifice was emphasized. The New Testament, to be sure, had asserted that the one sacrifice had been offered by Jesus, and that all believers had access to the Father through him. But this one offering seemed too far away to be effective, and the Church, as steward of the mys-

teries of God, assumed the right of perpetually repeating the sacrifice. The Presbyter thus became the sacrificing priest.

Economic questions force themselves upon the attention of every human society. They are treated in detail in the Pentateuchal legislation, and ample provision is there made for the support of the servants of the sanctuary. A tithe of the gross income of the Israelite is to be paid to the Levites, and from it a tenth is set apart for the priests. First-fruits, freewill offerings, and certain fines which inure to the benefit of the priests are added. The influence of this system on the development of the Canon Law cannot here be traced in detail. But we can see how the religio-political system set forth in the Old Testament would be used for the temporal advantage of the clergy. Even the vestments of the priesthood were to a certain extent identified with those of the Levitical system, though the parallel is not exact. Undoubtedly the Church seriously undertook to instruct the people in faith and morals. Precedent would be found in the teaching of priests and Levites, alluded to in the Old Testament, and for casuistry there was abundant material in the Levitical food and police regulations. Where it suited the Church to interpret literally this method was used; where this did not meet the exigency resort was had to allegory. The threefold or fourfold sense recognized by Augustine was now fully established.

The extent to which exegesis was subordinated to the interest of the Church may be illustrated by the rules of Tychonius, formulated by a Donatist writer, but fully approved by Augustine. The specifications are as follows: Of the Lord and his body (that is, the church); of the twofold body of the Lord (that is, of true and false Christians); of the promises and the law (developing the theory that all the promises of the Old Testament have the Christians in mind); of species and genus (that is, what is said of particular cities, lands, or persons, in the Old Testament may be applied in a wider sense); of the times (opening the door to all sorts of play on the numerical data of Scripture); of recapitulation (the theory seems to be that of a double sense, so that a predictive

passage may have its fulfilment at one time and yet point forward to a second and larger fulfilment still to come); of the devil and his body (that is, the reprobate or wicked).[1] The rules show plainly enough how the literal and historical sense is submerged, according to the demands of ecclesiasticism. Not content with the fourfold sense some expositors posited a sevenfold, typified by the seven seals of the Apocalypse. They are: 1, Literal or historical; 2, Allegorical; 3, Combination of both — the example is David's adultery, which combines a warning against that sin, with an allegorical condemnation of the Jewish people, personified in Uriah; 4, Teaching of the Trinity; 5, Parabolic, when the Scripture speaks of the same thing in different language in two passages (as where Abimelech is named, though from the parallel we find that Achish is meant); 6, Of the two advents of the Saviour; 7, In which we are instructed by the divine precepts.[2] The artificial nature of this classification is plain and it only shows the tendency of the times.

Devotees of the mystical sense find the literal meaning humdrum, as is illustrated by theosophy in all its forms, including the Jewish Kabbala, which reached its highest development in the Middle Age. Allegorists are prone moreover to dwell on the more obscure passages rather than those which are clear. This is illustrated by the endeavor to discover a meaning in the Hebrew proper names; the alleged etymologies would reveal mysteries hidden from the unlearned. Amram, father of Moses, was interpreted *Exalted-Father,* and applied to Christ. Jochebed, Moses' Mother, was *Grace-of-God,* and signified the Church. From Christ and the Church was born Moses (the spiritual law) and Aaron (the true priesthood).[3] The fact that Scripture has both plain and obscure passages was defended as the divine purpose — the plain passages for the unlearned, the obscure to stimulate the ingenuity of

[1] Burkitt, "Rules of Tychonius" (*Texts and Studies* edited by J. Armitage Robinson, III, No. 1, 1894).

[2] Angelomus, "Enarrationes in Libros Regum," Præfatio (Migne, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus,* Vol. 115, col. 245f.).

[3] Walafrid Strabo, *Glossa Ordinaria* ad Ex. vi: 20.

scholars. Bede asks: What does it profit us to know that Elkana had two wives, us who now live the celibate life, unless we can find the allegorical sense which edifies and gives us comfort?[4] Subordination of exegesis to the demand for edification has never been more distinctly set forth. Although not confined to the Middle Age, it appears more prominently there than later. Tradition and dependence on the Fathers were the order of the day. This may be illustrated by Isidore of Seville, who wrote a treatise on etymologies which is really a sort of encyclopedia of science as it was then taught. What interests us now is his treatment of the Old Testament, which is thoroughly allegorical. In fact he gathers up the allegories of earlier authors and gives us a condensed summary of what had been done or thought along that line.

From his *De Allegoriis* we may note that Laban is a type of the Mosaic Law, since Jacob (Christ) took his two daughters (the Jewish and the gentile Church). Leah, the weak-eyed, is type of the Jews, Rachel the beloved, type of the gentile Church. Lot again is the Law, and his two daughters are Samaria and Jerusalem. Pharaoh, Sisera, Goliath, represent the devil. Pharaoh's daughter, Moses' foreign wife, the queen of Sheba, and Ruth, typify the Church. Going farther back we may note that Adam is a type, *figura,* of Christ, since he was created on the sixth day, and Christ took the form of a servant in the sixth world-period (this according to the chronology of the Greek version), that he might re-create man into the image of God. Eve, made of the rib of the sleeping Adam, is a type of the Church created by the mystery of the blood and water which flowed from the side of the dying Christ. Abel, the good shepherd, Seth, whose name means Resurrection, Melchizedek, who gives bread and wine, Jacob as we have already seen, Job, Moses, Jephthah, Samson taking honey from the lion, as Jesus took his converts from the jaws of the devil, David — all these are types of Christ. On the other hand, the devil is represented among others by poor Uriah, the Hittite, whose wife (the Church)

[4] Cited by Diestel from Bede's *In Samuelem Prophetam.*

was desired by David (Christ). The boys who mocked Elisha are the Jews who derided Christ and were punished by the two bears — Vespasian and Titus. In the Old Testament no less than a hundred and twenty-nine personages are found to be figures of Christ, the Church, the Jews, or Satan.

This author has also a work entitled *Questiones in Vetus Testamentum,* from which a specimen may be given. It is in the form of a commentary, giving a few words of the text and then the alleged exposition, for example: *"In the Beginning*: — The beginning is Christ, as he said to the Jews (John viii:25). In this beginning therefore, God made the heavens, that is spiritual beings, *spirituales,* who meditate on and seek celestial things, and also carnal beings who have not yet stripped off the earthly man. *The earth was empty and void;* — The earth of our flesh was empty and void before it received the form of doctrine. *And darkness was on the face of the deep;* — because the blindness of sin and the obscurity of ignorance covered our hearts. *And the Spirit of God was borne, ferebatur, upon the waters;* — The Spirit of God hovers over, *superferebatur,* our dark and fluid heart, as over water, in whom we rest, by whose breath we are revived, and by whose waves we are washed."[5] After this we are not surprised to learn that the live coal of Isaiah signifies the hypostatic union of two natures in Christ, and that Jacob disguised by the skin of a kid is a type of Christ clothed with human nature.

Augustine and Isidore were the authorities relied upon in this period, and the strength of tradition is seen in the number of *catenae* that were compiled. The endeavor was to conserve the thought of earlier expositors. Even so original a thinker as Thomas Aquinas published a *Catena Aurea* on the Gospels, the nature of which is sufficiently indicated by its title. The interest of the age was turned to monastic piety, the sacraments, and the system of doctrine formulated in the creeds. The Old Testament was important so far as it could

[5] Isidori Hispalensis, *Quæstiones in Vetus Testamentum* (*Migne,* Vol. 83, col. 209f.).

be made to confirm the accepted beliefs on these topics. Hugo of St. Victor will serve as an example. In his chapter on the allegories he cautions the student that he must be firmly established in the literal sense before proceeding to the allegories which are strong meat. He compares the literal sense to the foundations of a building. On this foundation must be built up the structure of Faith. The first row of stones is belief in the Trinity; next the freedom of the will, then sin and penalty, followed by the sacraments instituted under the law of nature, and these by the sacraments of the Old Testament. The sixth row is the incarnation; the seventh the sacraments of the New Testament; eighth is the doctrine of the resurrection.[6] In order to have a true understanding, there must also be humility of mind, docility, and retirement from the world. In the current evaluation of the monastic life it is not strange that the monk was held to be the best expounder of Scripture.

This is not the place to discuss the great intellectual movement known as Scholasticism. Our concern is with its influence on the interpretation of Scripture, especially on the interpretation of the Old Testament. We recognize at once that the Bible was only one of the sources for philosophy or theology — these two are in fact one. The fundamental principle was that the Church is the visible Kingdom of God. Its authority was already imprinted on the Augustinian theology. The immediate task was to develop that theology in the light of the Aristotelian philosophy, rediscovered through translations from the Arabic. St. Thomas Aquinas is the one in whom the system came to full flower, and the extent of his influence down to the present day is known to every serious student of history. His attitude towards Scripture is sufficiently set forth in the opening chapter of his Summa, where he says: "So far as the things of the Old Law signify the things of the New Law, there is the allegorical interpretation. So far as the things done in Christ, or so far as the things which signify Christ, are types of what we ought to

[6] *Eruditionis Didascalicæ Libri Septem*, VI, 4 (Migne, Vol. 176, col. 802f.).

do, there is the moral interpretation. So far as they signify what relates to eternal glory, there is the anagogical interpretation." And again: "The multiplicity of these interpretations does not produce ambiguity or any kind of equivocation." [7]

The passages make clear that in this, as in other respects, the Saint adopts the current theory of a threefold sense, although he is more sober in applying it than were some of the doctors of the Church. That he was thoroughly familiar with the Bible in the Latin is evident; that he knew no Hebrew and little Greek need not be urged against him. Where he alludes to the Hebrew he depends upon Jerome, and his idea of a commentary as we have seen is an anthology of the Fathers. His own commentaries on Job, Song of Songs, and Psalms 1–50 present little that is new. In truth his interest was elsewhere than in the Old Testament. The Bible was one of the sources of his system, and in the Bible the more important part was the New Testament. But as he himself says, the Church has summed up the contents of revelation in the Creed. His task is to explain the articles of the faith according to the current philosophy. All science is tributary to theology, and theology confirms the Catholic faith. The need of allegory if the Old Testament is made subservient to this end must be self-evident. So much is implied also in the declaration that the *Church* had deduced the truth of the creed from Scripture, for this means that the exposition of the Fathers is authoritative; and that they made abundant use of allegory we have already discovered. The complete identity of creed and Scripture has become an axiom.

No doubt the thought of Thomas appeals to the Christian mind. All of us would be glad to think that theology, that is the knowledge of God and His ways with men, is really the *scientia scientiarum* to which all philosophy is tributary. The endeavor to realize this ideal must command our admiration. It is only when we come to the logical deductions of the theory that we hesitate. What Thomas means is quite

[7] *Summa*, Qu. I, 1, 10.

clear. In order to have a right view of the universe we must be persuaded of all the items of the creed. These he enumerates in one of his minor works. As they are the several articles of the accepted creed, they need not be repeated here; though we should notice that he affirms the seven sacraments as equally important with the articles of faith. In connection with each item he enumerates the various heresies that have been entertained concerning that particular item. This faith he believes to have been held by the Old Testament saints, beginning with Adam. Moreover, it has been revealed to some among the heathen, Job being one and the Sibyl another. In this connection he relates a legend about a sepulchre opened in the time of Constantine. In it was found the body of a man on whose breast was a golden tablet with the inscription: *"Christus nascetur ex Virgine, et ego credo in eum. O Sol, sub Irenae et Constantini temporibus iterum me videbis."*[8] He would have had no hesitation in attributing divine inspiration to Virgil, as was done by some of his contemporaries. In order to establish the belief, resort was had to allegory in his case also. One Fulgentius wrote a book in which he makes Virgil appear to him in a dream and reveal the hidden sense of his poems, beginning with the first line of the *Æneid* in which *arma* refers to what is physical, *virum* to what is intellectual, and *primus* to what is ornamental and artistic. No less an authority than John of Salisbury takes up the thought, and declaring that under the guise of legend Virgil expressed the truths of all philosophy, he traces the successive steps in the development of the human soul through the first six books of the *Æneid*.[9]

Further discussion of the application of this method to other literature does not belong here. So far as the Old Testament is concerned we may say that the doctors of the Church were agreed in using the three-fold or four-fold sense. The prominent names of Abelard, Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus, and Bonaventura may be added to those of Hugo of

[8] Cited by Werner, *Thomas von Aquino* (1859), II, p. 146.

[9] Comparetti, *Vergil in the Middle Ages* (1895), p. 117.

St. Victor and Thomas Aquinas as adepts in this art. From the Roman Catholic point of view it is a merit that these writers buttress the doctrinal system of the Church with Scripture texts. Among them Thomas Aquinas is *facile princeps* because of the thoroughly systematic manner in which he has carried out the theory. "Pope Clement XII in a Bull beginning with the words 'By the Word of God' makes mention of fourteen Sovereign Pontiffs who in solemn decrees have passed magnificent eulogiums on the Angel of the schools," [10] and the number has been added to by Leo XIII, whose encyclical of 1879 urged the restoration of Christian philosophy according to the mind of St. Thomas, and who pointed out that at the Council of Trent "the Summa of Thomas Aquinas lay open on the altar with the Holy Scriptures and the decrees of the Sovereign Pontiffs, that from it might be sought counsel and reasons and answers." [11] From the modern point of view it is of course no merit that Scripture should be interpreted according to a doctrinal system assumed at the outset. Our purpose is not to praise nor to blame, but to understand. That Thomas was thoroughly conscientious in defending the system of doctrine which was to him the most important thing in the world, all must recognize. And if this system of doctrine is the most important thing in the world, heresy is the thing most to be dreaded. St. Thomas indicates the state of mind when in the introduction to his commentary on the Psalms he mentions the condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia by the fifth General Council. Theodore had offended by insisting on the literal interpretation of the Messianic Psalms, and this was the heresy which Thomas warned against. In the dedicatory epistle prefaced to the *Catena Aurea,* he informs Pope Urban that he intends to give not only the literal sense of the Gospel but also the mystical sense, also to destroy error and to con-

[10] Vaughan, *Life and Labors of St. Thomas of Aquin* (1890), p. 340.

[11] Cited from the English translation prefixed to the *Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas, literally translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province,* Volume I (1911).

firm the Catholic faith.[12] If this was the common opinion we can understand the conclusion which the Church drew as to the need of suppressing heresy by the strong arm of the civil power.

Enough has now been said to show in what sense we may speak of scholasticism as dominant. In the Roman Church the authors we have adduced are authoritative. When the Council of Trent affirmed the true doctrine to be derived from tradition as well as Scripture, and that Scripture itself is to be accepted in the sense in which the Church interprets it, the meaning is that these mediaeval authors have given the true exposition of the Bible. Allegory, therefore, is not only authorized, but we may say enjoined. The theory was temporarily shaken, though not overthrown, by the revival of learning, for the attention paid to ancient literature in its natural sense made the artificial method of treating the Scriptures ridiculous. The attitude of the Humanists may be judged by the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum,* in one of which Magister Andreas Delitzsch is satirized as the man who lectures on the Metamorphoses of Ovid "and explains all the fables allegorically and literally." Details are given in another letter showing how the same book can be expounded quadruply, that is naturally, historically, literally, and spiritually. Thus the nine Muses allegorically signify the seven choirs of angels; Diana is the Virgin Mary, who goes hither and thither accompanied by her virgin nymphs; Cadmus seeking for his sister is Christ seeking the soul of man, and he builds a city, that is the Church. "Not without cause is it written that Bacchus was twice born, for by him is denoted Christ, who was born once before all worlds and a second time humanly and carnally. Furthermore, the story of Pyramus and Thisbe is to be expounded allegorically and spiritually, thus: Pyramus signifies the Son of God, and Thisbe the soul of man which Christ loves, and concerning which it is written in the Gospel: 'a sword shall pierce thine own soul'; for in like manner Thisbe slew herself with her lover's sword." [13]

[12] *Divi Thomæ Aquinatis Opera* (1775), Tomus IV, p. 2.
[13] *Epistola* XXVIII.

Although, as we shall see, Luther protested against the use of allegory, and Calvin even more emphatically, yet the method is so attractive to those who seek for mysteries in a sacred Book that its influence can be traced outside the bounds of the Catholic Church. Many Protestant theologians allow a typology which is not far removed from that of the Schoolmen. The most striking example is the exposition of the Song of Songs, for even to the present day this book is described as an allegory of the love of Christ and his Church. Whether this collection of love songs found its way into the Canon because it was interpreted allegorically, is not quite clear. In view of the prophetic representation of the relation between Yahweh and Israel under the figure of a marriage, this is not improbable, and both Targum and Midrash assume that the book is an allegory. From Origen down to the editors of our Authorized Version, the Christian interpretation has seen in the bridegroom the type of Christ, and in the bride either the Church or the individual soul. That St. Bernard preached eighty-six sermons on texts from this book is a matter of common knowledge. That religious affection often uses the language of human affection is proved here again as it is by the whole history of mysticism. The matter is of interest in connection with our present discussion only because it shows the measures which the believer finds necessary in adapting a changed religious experience to a Book which took form in an earlier time. The sufficiency of Scripture was hotly debated between Protestants and Catholics at a later date. A curious monument of the controversy is the pamphlet of Francis Hare on "the difficulties and discouragements which attend the study of the Scriptures in the way of private judgment."[14] Whether this essay was published in good faith is still a question. It certainly gives the Catholic argument though it was written by an Anglican bishop, for it roundly asserts that "the orthodox faith does not depend upon the Scriptures considered absolutely in themselves, but as explained by Catholick Tradition." A more

[14] First published in 1714; eighth edition in 1721.

modern statement is that of Newman that the doctrines of the Church "have never been learned merely from Scripture," [15] and the "Tracts for the Times" defend the Catholic interpretation at length.

As a supplement to this discussion, we may notice briefly some modern instances. One appears where we should least look for it, that is, in India. Among the myths of the Hindoos none is less acceptable to the western mind than that of Krishna. The career of this incarnation of Vishnu is a long series of murders, thefts, and adulteries. The god is the impersonation of unbridled sexual passion, having 180,000 wives and indulging himself immoderately with the women or goddesses whom he meets. Yet modern Hindooism is able to accept and worship Krishna and he has many warm adherents among educated Hindoos. "Many regard him as the Supreme Being who in his wondrous condescension mingled in the affairs of human life, and naturally their one endeavor is to explain away and account for the stories of sensuality which stain the fair name of their deity." [16] This they do in the manner now familiar to us; the loves of Krishna and the milkmaids are represented as allegories of divine love. It is unnecessary to give details. The case only shows that we are dealing with a phenomenon common to more than one religion. It is even applied in justification of the recital of the Creed, as though the mystical interpretation, which really sublimates the historical statements of the ancient document into symbols of the believer's inner experiences, were consistent with the intention of the Church. What is meant may be shown by a single paragraph: "*Born of the Virgin Mary* means that the dweller in the kingdom must be born of water as well as of the Spirit, not of the Spirit alone nor of the soul alone for Spirit is the life, soul supplies the form and body, and under this present dispensation all things are double, one against another, and the end will come when the man is as

[15] *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, p. 29. There also we find a defence of the allegorical method (p. 33f.).

[16] Martin, *The Gods of India* (1914), p. 140.

the woman and the woman as the man, neither male nor female." A little later in the same chapter we read: "When the soul, figured as Eve, listens to the seductions of sense, that is of life seeking to act apart from the whole, she becomes from generate *degenerate,* and must become *regenerate,* that is she must become purified or single-pointed and then perfect her purification by giving birth to the Christ through the Spirit, which is the true husband. Eve must become Mary, and her Son the St. George bruising the serpent's head. The soul is first the daughter, then the spouse, then the Mother of God." [17]

The book from which the above is quoted reproduces also the elaborate symbolism of numbers which goes back to Pythagoras or earlier, another evidence, if any were needed, of the tendency we have been discussing. So far as our investigation has gone, we have found the art of exegesis to consist in reading into the sacred text that which the expositor wishes to find there.

[17] W. F. Cobb, *Mysticism and the Creed* (1914).

V

LUTHER'S APPEAL

IT HAS become a commonplace of Church History that there were Reformers before the Reformation. The fact is that a highly organized community, such as the Roman Church had become, will always have critics among its more thoughtful subjects. Equally true is it that a complicated system of doctrine like that which had official sanction in the Middle Age will provoke opposition in some minds. The crusade against the Albigenses shows how formidable opposition to the received social order and to the dominant theology might become. As early as the twelfth century Joachim of Floris had advanced the theory that the Pope is Antichrist. Whatever knowledge of Scripture there was must have suggested to pious believers that the Gospel was something different from the theology of the Schoolmen. The revival of learning, as we have seen, gave men a new sense of literary values, and while Scripture was sometimes undervalued in comparison with the classic authors of Greece and Rome the importance of going back to the sources (in this case the Hebrew text of the Old Testament) was appreciated. Among the Jews there had come a reaction against the refinements of Rabbinical exegesis, and a more sober method of studying the text. Rashi became the standard commentator just because he gave attention to the literal meaning of the Bible. His influence on Christian exegesis has been considerable, mediated as it has been by Nicholas of Lyra.

That Nicholas had no intention of being an innovator is evident from his affirmation of the fourfold sense, and from his expressed willingness to submit his conclusions to the

judgment of the Church. But he does emphasize the literal sense, and in this almost slavishly follows Rashi. Even when Christian exposition differs from that of the Jews, he often gives the preference to the latter. His influence on Luther has become proverbial. Increasing interest in the Bible in the fourteenth century is indicated by Wycliffe's translation. Wycliffe indeed is the most important of Luther's forerunners, because of his desire to give the people the Bible in their own language. His emphasis was laid on the literal sense, and he warned against reading into the text that which the Holy Spirit does not mean. In Germany also there were editions in the vernacular before Luther's epoch-making work. Scholarly interest in the original text is indicated by the Complutensian Polyglot published just before Luther posted his Theses. Reuchlin's efforts to promote the study of Hebrew had given rise to an animated controversy in which the ignorance of the monkish agitators was ridiculed by men of learning. The careful observer must have seen signs of a new spirit in the universities and, in some of them at least, a revolt from the current scholasticism. Luther's hatred of Aristotle was probably not an isolated phenomenon. On the economic side the unrest was marked, and contributed to the desire for a change.

In Luther we can trace the gradual change which went on in the man trained in the scholastic theology, one who would like to have remained a loyal son of the Church, but who was driven to take one step after another away from tradition and into opposition to the organization with which he had been so closely connected. That he was trained in the scholastic theology is indicated by the fact that when first appointed to his professorship he was expected to lecture on Aristotle. Against this, however, he soon revolted, and then began his exposition of the Bible. His theology was still that which he had learned, and he was moved to anger when Eck accused him of being a heretic. His later attitude towards Aristotle is indicated by his declaration that there is more wisdom in one verse of the Psalms than Aristotle would express if he

had written a thousand books of Metaphysics. And later: "In scholasticism I learned nothing of what sin, righteousness, grace and Christian life are. I lost Christ there, but found him in Paul." Here we have the criterion which he applied to Aristotle and the Schoolmen not only, but to the Bible itself. The Fathers also lost their standing with him as infallible teachers, although he always valued Augustine. Here also we understand the motive. Luther was primarily a religious genius. He went through an experience similar to that of St. Paul, and among the Fathers none so nearly reproduced that experience as did Augustine. In his lectures he first gave a course on the Psalms and next took the Epistle to the Romans, the two books in which he found his religion most fully expressed.

It must be remembered also that he was pastor and preacher as well as professor, and it was here that the issue was joined. The sale of indulgences gave his confessants a false confidence, and thus cut at the roots of a real religious experience. The famous theses were posted in order that by an academic discussion men's ideas concerning sin, repentance, and the power of the Church might be clarified. And it is noticeable that the first one of the series goes back to the text of the Gospels in their literal meaning, as distinguished from the interpretation which the Church authorities were putting upon the words. It reads: When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says 'act penitence' (*penitentiam agite,* according to the Latin version) he means that all the life of the faithful should be penitent. And the next thesis carries out the thought: This word cannot be understood of sacramental penance, that is of the confession and satisfaction which are secured by the ministry of the priest. We see that the official interpretation of the Church, which found in the Gospel word 'repent' authorization for its demand of penance under the direction of the priest, is distinctly disavowed, because the text of the Gospel, taken in its literal sense, does not mean what the Church affirms. Almost more distinct is the declaration: Every truly penitent (*compunctus*) Christian has remission of pun-

ishment and guilt without letters of indulgence. And the ecclesiastical theory of a treasury of merits upon which the Pope could draw in favor of the purchaser of indulgences is contradicted in the sentence: The true treasure of the Church is the Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God.

While an academic debate on abstract questions of doctrine might have been allowed to pass without hostile criticism, an attack upon the traffic in indulgences was a different matter. Tetzel saw the danger to his trade, and scented heresy at once. His claim was that the Pope who had authorized the indulgences had a right to interpret Scripture, and to decide questions of faith. The principle of leading Churchmen was that the customs of the Church were divine truth because they were the customs of the Church. "If a tradition, a text of Scripture or a dogmatic affirmation was inconvenient, the Church, that is Rome, had the right of interpreting." [1] Where the sources of the Papal income were endangered it is easy to see what line the interpretation would take. The Reformer, however, did not realize the full meaning of the step he had taken until the debate with Eck. It was the determination of his opponent there to prove him a heretic — to Luther's indignation, as has been said. But the debate showed that if the Pope or the Canon Law, or the Councils, or even the Fathers were accepted as infallible authorities, Luther was in danger of the judgment. His appeal must therefore be to the Scriptures, and this came to him with full force at Worms.

Reflecting on his experiences at the Diet, he began at once his translation of the Bible. It was his appeal from the Church authorities to the common people. It is sometimes affirmed that he gave the Bible to his people, and the sentence is understood as if the Book had not been accessible to them before. But as we have seen, there were earlier versions in German and the printing press had sent forth several editions of the Latin. The truth is that the Bible had been known for the most part in the form in which the Church authorities had presented it — overlaid with legendary and allegorical

[1] Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte,* III (1910), p. 665.

material. Luther's own statement is that so many legends of the saints, passionals, edifying examples, and story-Bibles, had been circulated that the Psalter had been quite "thrown under the bench." But the Psalms are superior to the best of the legends, no matter how many they may be. What the legends tell us is what the saints have done; but the Psalms show us how they talked with God and prayed — so that the other examples appear as mere dumb saints, but those of the Psalms right active and living. "There you see into the heart of the saints, as into a beautiful, pleasant garden, nay into heaven, what beautiful flowers spring up out of all sorts of joyful thoughts of God on account of his goodness." [2] That the man who could write thus knew how to reach the hearts of the people is evident, and we are not surprised to learn that his New Testament went through twenty-two editions in Wittenberg alone during his lifetime, and that in the same period there were eleven editions of the complete Bible.

Like many another genius, Luther was little concerned about consistency, and a little reflection will show why different and even apparently contradictory utterances can be cited from his numerous works. The most of those works were called out by special emergencies, each forced from him by a new crisis. He says himself that whether he wills it or not he is compelled to learn something new every day "since so many eminent men press upon me as though for a wager, and give me something to do." In this connection he regrets his earlier position concerning indulgences because at that time he judged too mildly. When Prierias took up the defence "I discovered that indulgences are a mere deception of the Roman flatterers by which they take away the people's money and at the same time their faith in God." Then came Eck and Emser, and began to instruct him about the Pope — "and not to be ungrateful to such learned men, let me confess that their writings brought me forward. For though I denied that the Papacy had divine right, yet I was willing to confess its

[2] *Vorrede zum Psalter* (1528).

human right; but when I read the hairsplitting refinements of these coxcombs with which they support their idol, I realize that the Papacy is the kingdom of Babylon and the power of Nimrod the mighty hunter." [3] Later he might have included among his teachers the Anabaptists who compelled him to face another class of problems.

Our interest is in the Reformer's attitude towards the Bible, and we have seen how he was driven back to it as the infallible source of faith. His final position was that the Bible is superior not only to St. Peter and St. Paul, but even to all angels and to the humanity of Christ himself, because he declares that the word he speaks is not his own but His that sent him. But the question of interpreting the Word still confronted the inquirer. Or even more fundamental was the question of the Canon: What books are to be recognized as the Word of God? To this Luther's reply is well known. Starting from his religious experiences he gave the rule: What urges Christ (*was Christum treibt*) is Scripture, though written by a Judas; what does not stand this test is not Scripture though written by an Apostle. From this point of view it must be clear that not all parts of the Bible are of equal value. The New Testament is the primary source, and in the New Testament the Epistles of Paul and the Gospel of John have the preëminence. The oft quoted characterization of the Epistle of James is sufficient evidence of the freedom with which he approached what we should call questions of criticism. What about the Old Testament?

Here we note first of all that in principle Luther rejected the allegorical method. In his introduction to his translation he says that some seek a spiritual sense in the Old Testament as Origen, Jerome and other prominent men have done. This he does not approve, but cites Jesus' word: Search the Scriptures for they are they which testify of me, and uses this as the touchstone for the reader. This he develops more at length, saying: "If you will interpret well and securely, take Christ with you, for he is the man whom everything concerns." Whether

[3] *Von der Babylonischen Gefangenschaft der Kirche* (preface).

the rule could be applied without some use of allegory we may doubt, but there is no doubt of Luther's intention. He says for example, that allegory is a dangerous thing, though the words read so smoothly, for there is nothing behind them. It may do for the preachers who have not studied much, and who do not know how to expound the history and the text — they resort to allegory by which nothing definite is taught. In his own commentaries he follows Nicholas of Lyra closely, and commends him because he does not allegorize but holds to the history, that is the literal sense. On the other hand, he criticizes this writer for too close dependence on the Jewish exegetes. In practice, moreover, he is not able to avoid allegory altogether — the Epistle to the Hebrews gives him the example, and to that extent authorization. But the cases are not very numerous. Correct principles of Bible study are set forth in the preface to his translation of Isaiah, where he urges the reader to study the history recorded in the books of Kings in order to understand the situation in which the prophet uttered his discourses. It is necessary, he says, to know how it stands in the land, what events transpired, what the people thought, what were the relations which they sustained to their neighbors, friends or foes, especially their attitude towards their God and His prophets.

That the Reformer had his limitations is true, but it is not too much to say that he opened the way to a better understanding of the Bible. A really historical treatment must come later. But the germ of such treatment may be discovered in Luther's affirmation of the difference between the two Testaments which he defines as the difference between Law and Gospel. Here the Apostle Paul had shown the way, for according to him the function of the Old Testament (here, as among the Jews generally, the Pentateuch was the important part) was to show the real nature of sin. This was the way in which it prepared for the Gospel, the message of deliverance. The theory fell in with Luther's own experience, for in the cloister his struggle against fleshly desire had convinced him of the impotence of legalism, whereas the revela-

tion of grace in Christ gave the sense of forgiveness and led to newness of life. The application of the theory may be read in his introduction to the Pentateuch where he points out that the book of Genesis gives us fine examples of faith, but that Moses is the instrument for promulgating the Law. The multitudinous commands in the Levitical Code serve to burden the conscience with a multitude of sins, and convince the man of his impotence to all good.

The Old Testament therefore was viewed in two aspects. It contained the Messianic prophecies, which were still interpreted according to the tradition of the Church, and it contained the Law which was intended to convince men of sin. Melanchthon's *Loci*, which became the standard theological textbook for the new reformed Christian community, was based on the Epistle to the Romans and treated the Old Testament from this double point of view. The dawn of an historical understanding may be found in this instrument, especially in the Reformer's insisting on the original text as against the Roman exaltation of the Latin version. The reaction against this version extended to Jerome, its author, whom Luther criticizes severely, declaring that he says nothing of Christ — "he writes only of fasting, meats, virginity." Jerome's emphasis on monasticism would naturally offend Luther, but his judgment on the Father seems *justo durius* as Rosenmüller says. Further evidence of the Reformer's historical sense may be found in his recognition of the fact that Moses included in his Law many things which had been held by his forefathers, such as sacrifices, circumcision, discrimination between clean and unclean meats, some of these being even borrowed from heathenism. He boldly asserts that the Law of Moses does not concern us; the Gospel does not impose laws but teaches of the Spirit.

Although therefore Luther marks an advance, yet we are compelled to say that to approach the Old Testament with the determination to interpret it in the sense of the Reformers is similar to what we have found in the earlier period. That is, the temptation of the expositor is to read into his text what he

desires to find there. The fundamental assumption that the sense of Scripture is one and that the obscure sentences must be interpreted by those that are clear — by the analogy of faith as the phrase was — put bonds upon the expositor. All that we are concerned to show is that Luther was far freer than his predecessors. His impatience with earlier commentators was such that at times he was willing to throw away all commentaries and trust the common sense of the reader. He holds that the Holy Spirit is the clearest writer and speaker in heaven or on earth, and his words can have but one meaning, that which we call the literal testimony. This does not mean that there are no figures of speech discovered by the same common sense that we use in studying other books.

If from our point of view we find that history was very imperfectly apprehended by this great leader we may still agree that he opened the road to a sound historical exegesis "but his century and he lacked the means to follow the path." [4] The strength of tradition showed itself more distinctly in his followers. They had the more mechanical view of faith which regards it as acceptance of a philosophic system, a view of the universe, resting on an infallible authority. The infallible authority was now no longer the scholastic tradition, but it was the Bible. The position accepted by the Lutheran theologians may be stated in the words of Melanchthon's disciple, George Major, who in 1550 published an essay on the origin and authority of the Word of God. His statement is: "One and the same doctrine had been in the Church from the beginning of the world to the present time; there is perfect agreement between prophets and Apostles, one voice in all." [5] Melanchthon himself affirmed a continuous succession of prophets, the first one being Adam. A certain gradation in rank was allowed, some being greater than others; but this made no essential difference in their teaching. How much must be supplied by the imagination if this theory

[4] Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, III, p. 867.

[5] I owe the citation to Diestel (p. 233), not being able to consult Major's book.

is to be carried through is made clear when we read the list of names of the prophets; it includes Adam, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and so on.[6] Whether such a theory did not really play into the hands of the Roman Catholics was a question, for it is evident that the revelations granted to some of these earlier chosen men had not come down in writing. The polemic as to the sufficiency of Scripture, however, does not seem to have considered this point.

An issue raised by the Council of Trent (besides the one on the necessity of tradition) concerned the extent of the Canon. Chemnitz, whose *Examen* became a standard work on the Protestant side, took occasion to discuss the origin of the Old Testament. His argument was that the revelation given to Adam was soon corrupted, just because oral tradition could not long remain true. This question, however, became acute a little later. The theory that orthodoxy was necessary, was held by Protestants as well as Catholics, and if Scripture was the source of correct doctrine, this doctrine must be found in the Old Testament as well as the New. Melanchthon set an example which was followed for a century, by demonstrating all the articles of the faith from the book of Isaiah. They are: The unity of God, the divine and human nature of the Messiah, as well as his birth from a virgin, his death and resurrection, the call of gentiles into the Church, the remission of sins, eternal life and future reward and punishment. He even finds numerical basis for a prediction of the time of the advent.[7] The example only shows how far the leading theologian of the Reformation was from a really historic view.

Perhaps the name of leading theologian of the Reformation belongs rather to Calvin. His clear and logical mind and his thorough scholarship enabled him to formulate a system which has not yet lost its power. As to Scripture, with which we are

[6] *Argumentum in Esaiam Prophetam* (*Corpus Reformatorum*, XIII, Col. 794).

[7] *Ibid.*, col. 799f.

here concerned, his position is quite clear. He energetically rejected all allegory, declaring it a *commentum Satanæ*, and adding that it is something like sacrilege to turn Scripture one way and another and to indulge our fancies as in sport.[8] He declares that God cannot be reconciled by sacrifice, basing his opinion on utterances of the prophets. The difficulty of accounting for the elaborate legislation of Leviticus is met by the assertion that the ritual laws are a commentary on the Decalogue, which Calvin regards as of binding force.[9] He even departed from the current of Protestant thought when he refused to find Messianic predictions in many passages, and in the Psalms seeks the historical background of those which had been referred to Christ. In his time the miraculous element was no stumbling block, and the Copernican view of the universe had hardly begun to attract the attention of the more daring spirits. In exegesis Calvin was distinctly in advance of his time, freer than Luther in the rejection of allegory and typology. But it was Luther who opened the road to a sound exegesis and the merit of leadership belongs to him.

[8] De Optimo Methodo (*Corpus Reformatorum*, XXXVIII, 2, col. 405).
[9] *Corpus Reformatorum*, LII, p. 7.

VI

PROTEST AND REACTION

THE REFORMATION was a protest against the Roman system. But the Reformers brought with them the idea of faith as the acceptance of a system of doctrine divinely taught. In the two centuries after Luther's death, the burning question with the theologians was how this system could be certified as in fact divine. Even in Luther's lifetime there were those who drew radical conclusions from his premises. He had shown the common man that the conscience has its rights, and that Scripture is so plain that private interpretation is justified. Since we cannot have the blessings of liberty without having some risk of its abuse, it is not strange that individual vagaries soon showed themselves. How the peasants interpreted the new doctrine is well known, and among Luther's colleagues ideas which he regarded as heretical were held and published. The Old Testament gave occasion for difference of opinion. Since Moses allowed polygamy Münzer practised it. The Old Testament commended heroes like Gideon who slew the enémies of the chosen people. But these new sectaries claimed to be the true Israel, and wielded the sword against the Canaanites, that is against all who refused to accept their doctrine. From the affirmation that the Law was no longer binding on the Christian it was easy also to infer the same antinomian principles which gave the Apostle Paul trouble in some of his churches. Heresy was no new thing, but the Roman Church had been able to check it by calling in the help of the civil arm. It was difficult for the Protestants to defend the right of private judgment and at the same time punish those who exercised the right.

However, the leaders of the various churches were in the orthodox tradition, that is, they had brought with them a system in many respects identical with that taught by Thomas Aquinas. The Catholics could of course prove the system by tradition, and at the Council of Trent this was officially declared to be binding. The same council made the Latin version, current in the Church, the authentic text in all controversies. On these two points — the validity of tradition as against the sole authority of Scripture, and the accuracy of the Vulgate, as contrasted with the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament — the issue was joined. The Protestant creeds make strong affirmations on both points. In theory also, the allegorical method was rejected, although when the emphasis was laid on preaching, as the most important part of the public service, and when this preaching was avowedly based on Scripture, some latitude was allowed, at least by way of illustration, and, as Luther said, of ornament. To prove the system of doctrine from the Old Testament was a matter of some difficulty, and it was not made easier when differences arose between the two Protestant communions, Lutheran and Reformed.

It is not a part of the present task to enter into the history of controversy. The *Odium theologicum* has never been more unedifyingly displayed than in the centuries we now have in mind. Common to the Protestant parties was the belief that the Pope was Antichrist, and that the Roman Church was the Whore of Babylon. As to the attitude of Lutherans on points on which they differed from Calvinists it will be enough to cite the title of one work: *Absurda absurdorum absurdissima, Calvinistica absurda, hoc est invicta demonstratio logica, philosophica, theologica, aliquot horrendorum paradoxorum Calviniani dogmatis.* The same doughty fighter who concocted this is said to have published a pamphlet, *Bellum Jesu Christi et Jo. Calvini.*[1] The Socinians came in

[1] The title of the *Absurda Absurdorum* is taken from Weber, *Einfluss der Protestantischen Schulphilosophie* (1908), p. 9, and of the other work from an article on Grawer, the author, in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie.* I have not seen the publications.

for their share of objurgation and later the Arminians were treated in the same way. Doubtless our age is unable to appreciate the earnestness with which such discussions were carried on. The temper of the English Puritans may give us some light. Moreover, we should not forget that a practical interest underlay the polemic. The professors of theology were training men for the ministry in the several Churches. It was necessary to instruct them so that they would be sound in the faith. This faith was the faith of Luther or of Calvin, as the case might be. Melanchthon's *Loci,* which was the theological textbook of Germany for many years, was intended to explain and defend the simple faith of the Gospel. Its aim was to this extent practical. Men, sinners, must be brought to repentance and salvation. This Gospel was, to be sure, the Gospel of Paul, for the experience of the Reformers was distinctly Pauline, and Melanchthon's book originated in a course of lectures on the Epistle to the Romans. The examination of candidates for the ministry must be based on some such compendium. But as time went on and the polemic of which we have learned became more animated, the need of a metaphysical basis for theology made itself felt. The professors of theology in this period were also teachers of philosophy. Thus the Aristotelian system which was so energetically repudiated by Luther, came again into honor.

We are here concerned with the influence of these movements on the exposition of the Old Testament. The task of the exegete was a double one. He must prove the harmony of Scripture, for *ex hypothesi,* God being its author, there could be no inconsistencies. He must also bring out the distinction between Law and Gospel, for this also was an axiom of the Protestant leaders. Titles can be quoted on both topics, on the one side Althamer's *Conciliationes Locorum Scripturae qui Specie tenus inter se pugnare videntur* (1597), and on the other Artopæus' *Discretio locorum Legis et Evangelii* (1534).[2] A more elaborate Conciliation was Pfeiffer's

[2] Artopæus is cited from Heppe, *Dogmatik des Deutschen Protestantismus im sechzehnten Jahrhundert* (1857).

Dubia Vexata Scripturae Sacrae (1699), which marked the culmination of Harmonistic efforts. The Jews had set the example as we saw in discussing Manasseh ben Israel. All parties — Catholics, Lutherans and Reformed — would agree in the principle underlying such attempts, that is that God cannot contradict Himself. What the Catholics asserted was that the Scripture needed the interpretation of the Church embodied in tradition, whereas the Protestants affirmed the perspicuity of both Old and New Testaments. The question still remained: What is it that proves Scripture to be the Word of God? To this the Catholic had a ready answer — the Church has authoritatively declared it. The Protestant found a triple answer. First was the Testimony of the Holy Spirit, and this is affirmed in the creeds. What it means is that the religiously minded man finds religion expressed in Scripture. As it was afterwards put by Coleridge: What finds me is inspired. Only the doubt might arise whether all parts of the Old Testament do actually appeal to the Christian believer in such measure that he can accept the whole volume as being, or even as containing, the Word of God.

A second line of argument was found in the testimony of the early Church, and on this ground the so-called Apocrypha were rejected, or at least pronounced to be of secondary importance by the Protestants. Thirdly, it was held that the authors of the Biblical books were attested as prophets by the miracles wrought in their favor. This again would not be objected to by the Catholics, only they claimed that the miracles were not confined to the early age. In the first period of Reformation thought there seems not to have been a distinct theory of inspiration, that is a theory of the inspiration of the writers of the Books, as distinct from that of the prophets whose words they recorded. In fact, Luther's freedom in acknowledging that some wood, hay, and stubble might have come into some of the Books along with the gold, silver, and precious stones, would seem to preclude such a theory. The lengths to which some theologians were willing to go is indicated by the controversy whether there were

solecisms in the New Testament. The stricter party denied that there could be any, since the Holy Spirit could not be supposed to make a mistake. Those who affirmed the contrary were accused of blasphemy. The final formulation was the theory of verbal inspiration, and, as if this were not enough to insure the authority so much desired, the hypothesis of Chemnitz was taken up and expanded. It was supposed that the prophets when they had pronounced their discourses posted up copies of the revelations at the door of the temple, and that when the people had had sufficient time to take cognizance of them the temple servants took them down and laid them away with the earlier parts of the sacred Book.[3] The trouble with the hypothesis is that there is not the slightest historical evidence for it, and that it goes directly against all that we know of the relations between prophets and priests throughout the preexilic period.

This theory, that an official sanction must have been given to the revelation, may be illustrated again from Carpzov, whose introduction to the Old Testament had a wide vogue. He maintains that in order that a book should be canonical, it was not enough that it be divinely inspired. There should be some certificate that it was divinely ordered and consecrated and handed to the Church as the rule of faith and morals.[4] Undoubtedly the great folio volumes of commentaries published in this period prove that these scholars took themselves seriously, and there is no need to minimize their scholarship. The emphasis laid on the original languages of Scripture led to a minute examination of grammar and lexicon, and the controversy with opponents, whether liberals like Grotius, or Roman Catholics like Richard Simon, compelled careful attention to the meaning of each verse. All the scholarship, however, was made subservient to orthodoxy, and this was the orthodoxy of the particular communion to

[3] Marloratus, *Prophetia Esaiæ cum catholica Expositione ecclesiastica* (1610), Argumentum.

[4] J. G. Carpzov, *Introductio ad Libros Historicos Bibliorum Veteris Testamenti* (Editio Secunda, 1727), p. 24.

which the scholar belonged. A new scholasticism seems to have mastered the Churches. Quenstedt's definition may be quoted to show the point of view. The Old Testament, he says, is the collection of books which by inspiration of God were written by prophets predicting the advent of the Messiah, in the Hebrew language, were received by the Jewish Church, approved by Christ and the Apostles, and recognized by the primitive Church to be the perpetual rule of faith and life in the Church Universal. The prophets have become writers instead of speakers — the pens of the Holy Spirit. Differences of style in the different books are due to a gracious accommodation on the part of the divine Author.

Since an authentic text was a need of the theologian, it was assumed that the original had been kept pure in all ages, and that the Hebrew vowel points were of equal antiquity with the consonants. The opposite opinion was the occasion of an animated debate in which the two Buxtorfs, father and son, took the leading part. The more historical view was broached by Ludovicus Cappellus, professor at Saumur. The Buxtorfs were soundly orthodox and defended the antiquity of the punctuation — a view now thoroughly discredited. Details cannot be given here. The incident is interesting as a symptom of a dawning realization of the problems presented by the Old Testament. The Roman Catholic defence of the Vulgate as the authentic recension led scholars of this school to affirm the corruption of the Hebrew. It was easy to say that the malice of the Jews had led them to conceal originally Messianic passages in order to refute Christian claims. The best known exponent of this view is John Morin, who held that it would be shameful for the Church to be in bondage to the synagogue. The polemic motive in his discussion is evident, but his careful examination of the text at least compelled the Protestants to take account of the facts. On this account Morin has been called the father of textual criticism.

Perhaps this honor belongs rather to Cappellus, whom we have already met as an innovator on the subject of the vowel

points. His *Critica Sacra* gives a systematic discussion of the various readings found in parallel passages of the Hebrew, or suggested by the versions. A comparison of Kings and Chronicles brought to light a number of such variants, and in many cases the Greek version revealed an underlying Hebrew better than the one preserved by the Jews. The book was bitterly attacked by the Buxtorfs and others, but again the facts were called to the attention of many thoughtful persons. Cappellus, it should be remarked, was a loyal Protestant and had no motive except recognition of the truth. In fact he took pains to show that the recognition of various readings in no way endangered faith and morals. British scholars kept in touch with those on the continent, and so conservative a scholar as Usher was candid enough to recognize that a sacred text was subject to the same laws of transmission as were other ancient documents. Dogmatic theologians were disquieted, however, by the suggestion, and the publication of various readings in Walton's Polyglot caused John Owen to utter a sharp attack on the editor, under the title *"Of the Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew and Greek Text of the Scripture, with Considerations on the Prolegomena and Appendix to the late Biblia Polyglotta."* [5] Walton replied in an equally animated publication, *The Considerator Considered.* Party feeling no doubt had something to do with this debate, but the cause of truth was advanced.

In the leading ecclesiastical circles the orthodox view still prevailed, and the subservience of exegesis to dogma is indicated by the fact that almost every Biblical scholar was also professor of dogmatics. An example is the Lutheran Calovius (Calov) whose chief exegetical work was called out by his opposition to Grotius. Grotius, as we shall see, published Annotations to the Bible in which he emphasized the literal sense, illustrating it by parallels from secular writers, many of them heathen. Calovius, to counteract the dangerous tendency of such a work, published a *Biblia Illustra,* in which he took up Grotius' Annotations one by one, and gave the cor-

[5] Owen's Works, Vol. IV. The Epistle Dedicatory is dated 1658.

rective. His scholarship is indisputable, and his knowledge of literature extensive. Moreover, he insists on the literal sense. But the literal sense is everywhere made to support the dogmatic tradition. His title page, which is too long to quote, boasts that he has examined the readings of the versions and vindicated the purity of the Hebrew text, that he refutes the errors of Jews and heretics, and that he submits the depravations and false interpretations of Grotius to examination and explodes them.[6] His prejudice against Calvinists, Catholics, and Socinians led him to deny the merits of all, and he declared that the Jews can teach us nothing concerning their own sacred Book. The work is prefaced by an elaborate discussion of Old Testament chronology, and by a treatise on weights and measures. In this period it became the fashion to supplement the notes on the Hebrew text by elaborate essays on questions that might arise. For example, Pfeiffer, in the *Dubia Vexata* already referred to, takes occasion to discourse at length on Cain's dialogue with Abel.

The theory of perspicuity could not altogether hide the fact that there were some passages in the Old Testament not altogether plain. Why else should such elaborate commentaries be necessary? The answer given was the same that we have met before — that God was pleased at times to speak obscurely because if all were too easy the reader would feel a *fastidium* for the Book. John Gerhard, the greatest theologian of the seventeenth century, gives this reason, and adds that the obscurity drives us to more earnest prayer, incites our zeal for study, humbles our pride, keeps the profane from knowing the truth, and increases men's reverence for the ministry.[7] The corollary of this emphasis on the more perspicuous passages was the selection of these passages as the basis for dogmatic treatises. Sebastian Schmidt of Strassburg, one of the ablest Biblical scholars of the seventeenth century, gave a course of lectures on the *Dicta Probantia*, and these lectures were afterwards published with the title

[6] *Biblia Illustrata* (1672). [7] Cited from Diestel, p. 375.

Collegium Biblicum.[8] The result, which was not foreseen by those who followed the method, was that the conception of a Biblical dogmatic, distinct from the philosophical dogmatic on which the chief stress was laid, came into men's minds and prepared the way for a more historical understanding of the Scripture. It might indeed occur to some that if this part of the Bible was the important part, the rest might safely be neglected. This conclusion was hindered by the necessity of studying Church history, for the Roman Church must be shown to have departed from the primitive faith. Church history, however, began, as was held by all parties, in the earliest period. And until recent times a connected presentation of Hebrew story was made the introductory portion of the history of the Church. To a certain extent, therefore, a corrective was applied to the atomizing method of the theologians. But that the interest was not what we should call historical is evident. An example is the "Impartial Church History of Old and New Testaments from the Creation of the World down to the Year 1730."[9] This work, published in two thick quartos, divides the whole history of the world between Old and New Testaments, the Old Testament being given 564 pages, the New Testament part covering all the rest of the time.

The theological interest of such works is indicated by the space allotted to the earliest ages, and the discussion of such questions as whether Adam knew of the Trinity. Since all three Persons took part in the creation, it was argued that Adam must have had knowledge of them. Heidegger's *Historia Sacra Patriarcharum* devotes its first volume to the Antediluvians, and the second ends with the death of Jacob. One chapter is devoted to the Church and Theology of the Patriarchs, one to the polygamy of Lamech, another to the theology and idolatry of the Cainites. These are cited simply

[8] The title is taken from Von Coelln, *Biblische Theologie* (1836), p. 19, where some other works of the same kind are mentioned.

[9] Written by various authors but edited by Heinsius. Two supplementary volumes brought the history down to 1760.

as specimens. One author published a history of the Noachian Church; another gave a history of Paradise. A literary history of the antediluvian age was written by still another.[10] Much attention was given to recondite questions, such as the date of the creation, whether the nineteenth or the twenty-sixth of October. The Rabbis as we know had settled the day to their satisfaction. Similarly: How long were Adam and Eve in Paradise? Was Abel married? Did Enoch go to heaven in his earthly body? Doubtless many of these discussions took the place of modern doctors' dissertations, and were simply tests of scholarship or of ingenuity. And we must recognize that important contributions to Biblical science were made by these students. Biblical geography, Biblical natural science, and Biblical antiquities were made to throw light on the sacred text, and some of the essays in these departments are still valuable. But it remains true of the professed expositors that they found in the text the ideas that they brought with them. In the eighteenth century a Swiss theologian put into an epigram the results of his observation, characterizing the Bible as the book in which each one sought and in which each one found his own *dogmata.*

[10] Statements of Diestel, p. 461. Heidegger's *Historia Patriarcharum* (1683) is the only one of the group that I have seen.

VII

ATTEMPT OF THE FEDERAL SCHOOL

IN THE multitude of theological parties which contended with each other in the seventeenth century, it seems impossible to choose one as more important than another. But the influence of what is known as the Federal School on Protestant thought has been so marked that it deserves some attention. We have seen that polemic was the order of the day, the official teachers in each branch of the Church claiming to have the true doctrine and branding the others as heretics. All parties appealed to Scripture, and all agreed in the view that Scripture was a divinely given system of truth, a philosophy which was substantially the same in the Old Testament and in the New. No department of inquiry was allowed to escape from the bonds of dogma, and even the sciences which we should call secular were subordinate to the crown of the sciences, theology. Whether in fact a supernatural revelation was necessary to establish the propositions which were fundamental in any religious system was a question which was raised later. For the period we now have in mind so radical a departure as would be implied in the denial of the fact of revelation had not appeared in the theological world.

It is a recurrent phenomenon, however, in the history of human thought that sharp polemic leads to examination of the adversary's opinion, and usually to some concession. Rigid orthodoxy confronting heterodoxy may give way to a mediating school. Such a school arose in Holland, the country where there was the largest freedom of discussion. It was in Holland that the Arminians attempted to modify the

rigid doctrine of Calvin concerning an absolute predestination, and it was here that Grotius approached the Old Testament from a more liberal point of view, arousing the wrath of Calovius as we have seen. The merit of his work is that it emphasized the historical element in the Bible by bringing its affirmations into comparison with those of other literatures. Among Dutch scholars of this period there were others who contributed to the release of Old Testament science from the bondage of dogma and prepared the way for an independent Biblical scholarship.

The Federal School takes its name from the emphasis which it laid on the idea of a *covenant* as the foundation of theological theory. In a sense the idea of a covenant between God and man was not new. It is found in the Bible and in fact in early society the covenant relation forms the only social bond except that of blood. It is not strange, therefore, that the Israelites regarded the relation between themselves and their divinity as the result of such a covenant as the one which bound their separate clans together in the larger social unit. The picturesque embodiment of this idea is the story of the agreement with Abraham, in which the two parties, God and the Patriarch, pass between the pieces of a slain animal, thus invoking on themselves blood revenge if they are unfaithful (Genesis xv). Later in the narrative we have the more important agreement between Yahweh and Israel at Sinai. In the mind of the narrator this was no doubt a confirmation and renewal of the pledge made to the Fathers of the nation. Jeremiah, or one of his disciples, believes that a new and regenerated society will be based on a new covenant, more spiritual and more effective than the old. Among the Fathers of the Church we find that Irenaeus, at least, emphasized the idea, for he speaks of the covenants with Adam, Noah, Moses, and Christ, or according to another text, with Noah, Abraham, Moses and Christ.[1]

Apparently the idea was not followed up until Reformation times, when we find it in Calvin, though his doctrine of elec-

[1] *Adversus Hæreses, III,* xi, 11 (edition of W. W. Harvey, 1857).

tion did not allow him to extend the covenant to the whole human race. In his mind the covenants became something different from treaties or agreements between parties. They were promises of grace on the part of the divinity who alone has perfect freedom, promises fortified by sacraments, circumcision under the Old Testament, baptism under the New, which were pledges for the fulfilment of the promise. In this form they appealed to the Reformer, because they were specifically described in the Bible itself — the stories of Abraham and Moses. Later, however, the covenant was carried back to the beginning of human history. Olevian, a Swiss theologian, developed the idea somewhat more fully in a work published in 1585, strictly Calvinistic in that it emphasizes the covenant with the elect.[2] That the subject was in the air, as we say, is indicated by another author, Eglin, whose work, *De Fœdere Gratiæ* was published at Marbung in 1613.[3] The real founder of the school was Cocceius (Koch), professor at Leyden from 1650 to 1669. His life came at a time when the High Calvinists and the Remonstrants were carrying on their debate. He had no wish to favor the liberal party, but rather to give the orthodox a more rational basis for their interpretation of the Old Testament. To a very moderate extent he attempted an historical interpretation by carrying the idea of the covenant back to the beginnings of the race.

According to the narrative in Genesis, God gave a command to the first man. This was now interpreted as a covenant, as though the Creator had said: Obey the commandment, and I on my part will give you eternal life. The disobedience which followed was therefore a breach of the covenant, and a new device must be found if men were to be saved. This was the covenant of grace, primarily between God the Father and His Son, according to which the Father pledged Himself

[2] *De Substantia Fœderis Gratuiti inter Deum et Electos* cited by Diestel, p. 288. The only work of Olevian accessible to me is his *Expositio Symboli Apostolici, in qua summa Gratuiti Fœderis Æterni inter Deum et Fideles tractatur* (Frankfurt, 1576).

[3] Not accessible to me, but discussed by Diestel in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, X, 214.

to redeem the elect because of the Son's self-sacrifice. In the Old Testament this covenant is effective as well as in the New, the only difference being that the Old Testament saints were saved by hope in a coming Redeemer, Christians by faith in one who has come. It is difficult to overestimate the influence which this theory has had on the Protestant Churches, both in Germany and Great Britain. Evidence is given by the Westminster Confession, in which the theory is distinctly set forth.

Criticism of the doctrine is easy. For one thing it reads into the Biblical narrative what is not there. In the mind of the narrator, the command to Adam is not conceived of as an agreement between parties, but simply as an act of the divine Ruler, who has a right to impose His will as He may choose. Even the alleged covenant with Noah is so called only by courtesy, for in form it is simply a promise, confirmed by a sign given. No condition is imposed, and there is no promise of a salvation to come. The covenant at Sinai indeed is formally correct — it is an agreement between two parties, by which Israel is pledged to do certain things, and in return Yahweh will give the people possession of Canaan. But to read into the account a promise of the Messianic time is to abandon the literal interpretation, which is supposed by the Protestant principle to be the only correct method of treating the Scripture. At first sight therefore the alleged advance made by this school seems to be an illusion. But that there was some advance is made by the attitude of the orthodox party which at first denounced Cocceius as a Judaizer and a heretic. More clearly than had been done before he recognized certain imperfections (*defectus*) in the Old Testament. One of these is the promise of earthly prosperity given to the Israelites, for this encouraged the desire for material goods. The forgiveness of sins also is less complete under the Old Covenant, and on this account Old Testament believers could have less perfect assurance of salvation. Their spirit was one of fear rather than the confidence of sonship. In this direction there was an approach to a more historical apprehension.

Successive steps in the relations of God and men were discovered — a rudimentary theory of evolution.

The idea thus broached was carried into more detail by the disciples of the great theologian. The covenant of grace was traced through three stages — that of the family in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that of the theocracy from Moses onward through the history of Israel — and that of the universal Church from the time of Christ. One scholar finds it possible to divide each of the three periods into seven sections, and he discovers a certain correspondence in the three sets. This is of course over-refinement, but it remains true that the idea of a Biblical theology distinct from dogmatics was brought to view by these discussions. But that dogma still has much to say is made evident by a work which we may call the culmination of the Federal system. This is the *Oeconomia Fœderum Dei cum Hominibus* of Witsius, first published in 1677, translated into English in 1771, in which language it went through several editions. After an introductory discourse in which the author treats the nature of the divine covenants in general he takes up the covenant of works and describes the contracting parties, the condition of obedience, the promises, the penal sanction and the sacraments. Of these the Sabbath is the chief. He then narrates the violation of the covenant on the part of man and its consequent abrogation by God. The second book introduces the covenant of grace, tracing it to the earliest age, and making the agreement between Father and Son the basis of the doctrine of the atonement. The third book is entitled: The Covenant of God with the Elect, and includes the dogmatic *loci* of election, vocation, justification, and sanctification. The fourth book traces the historical development from the time of Adam to Moses. The doctrine of the prophets is dismissed in few words, on the ground that it has been treated elsewhere, but so much the more space is given to the types.

Here we come upon what is really a recrudescence of scholasticism. The allegorical method had been rejected, but the Old Testament believers were dependent on the promises, and it

was necessary to find these promises in their Bible. Cocceius set the example, and his contemporaries commended him because he found Christ everywhere in the Old Testament, whereas Grotius was accused of finding him nowhere. Where direct predictions of the Messiah were not uttered, adumbrations of him must be found. The resulting typology is not as extravagant as the old allegory, but points in the same direction. It is not true, as has sometimes been said, that Cocceius affirmed every text of Scripture to mean all that it can be made to mean, for he qualified his declaration by consideration of the intention of the writer and the agreement of the context. Yet to us the artificial nature of an exposition which makes Adam and David types of Christ, the slain Abel a type of Christ in his death, Enoch a type of Christ in his exaltation, must be evident. The panegyric of Farrar, therefore, which says that "this theologian, almost for the first time, developed the fruitful conception of the progressiveness of revelation," cannot be taken at its full value. But it remains true that when Cocceius' environment is considered we must give him the credit of attempting to break away from the bonds of dogma, or at least from the stereotyped vocabulary of the dogmaticians.

Cocceius was a thorough Hebrew scholar, and his lexicon was useful to several generations of students. His commentary on the Psalms is accounted one of the best published in the seventeenth century. In treating the Apocalypse he was less happy, being influenced by the tradition which has not yet died out and which sees in that book a prediction of all future Christian history. His axiom that Scripture can contain nothing unworthy of God, that is, nothing which the expositor thinks unworthy of God, was the one universally accepted in that period. Yet his influence in promoting sound scholarship should be recognized. Among members of his school Vitringa takes high rank in the estimation of Old Testament scholars even at the present day. Other names might be mentioned to show the activity of the leaders of the Reformed Church of Holland in this period. One only should

have a little attention because of his opposition to one of Cocceius' aberrations, even thus showing his influence. This man is Balthazar Bekker, pastor first at Franeker and afterwards at Amsterdam. He drew the unfavorable attention of the theologians first by defending the right of teaching when the attempt was made to prohibit the philosophy of Descartes in the university of Franeker. The appearance of a comet in the heavens in 1680 aroused men's fear of impending disaster or of the end of the world. Bekker preached against the superstition, and published the sermon. His attention being thus turned to apocalyptic expectations, he published also a commentary on the book of Daniel, in which he controverted the view of Cocceius. Cocceius, although he had a more historical view than the stricter Calvinists, showed himself under the influence of tradition in his interpretation of Daniel. He interpreted the vision of the four beasts as a prediction of events that came after the advent of Christ. Bekker saw that expectations of a miraculous intervention of God led to neglect of genuine Christian living. Hence his commentary, which at least discouraged these fanciful interpretations.

Bekker's most important work, however, was his attack on the belief in witchcraft. This was made in a book entitled *The Bewitched World.*[4] Like the others, this originated in a series of sermons. Some early pastoral experiences had convinced him that the phenomena then attributed to demonic influence were simply cases of disease, and this led him to examine the Scripture passages which were adduced to confirm the popular belief. He soon came to the conclusion that the alleged magicians of Babylon were powerless, and the parallel account in Exodus fixed this belief more firmly in mind. The resulting inquiry into the power of the devil need not be reproduced here. The case is cited to show that there was a growing appreciation of the nature of the Old Testament, and something like an historical interpretation. His conclusion, after examination of the Biblical evi-

[4] *De Betovered Weereld* (1691).

dence, was that the popular belief was not derived from the Scriptures but from heathenism, because "those who have least understanding of Scripture have the most of this superstition."

Like other men who are ahead of their time Bekker suffered for his opinions. The ecclesiastical authorities took up his case and not only deposed him from the ministry, but excluded him from the communion. That he was not a rationalist, but a thoroughly orthodox believer, was made evident by the volume of his sermons on the faith of the Reformed Church of the Free Netherlands which he published in 1696. He was a man just enough ahead of his time to call forth the *odium theologicum,* always more violent against innovators within the Church than against unbelievers outside. Grieved at the attitude of his brethren, he yet had the satisfaction of seeing that he had advanced the cause he had at heart. His work was translated into German, French, and English, and contributed to a more healthy opinion throughout Europe.

VIII

RISE OF A MORE HISTORICAL VIEW

HITHERTO we have followed the stream of orthodox exposition, tempered at times by some slight apprehension of the historical process by which the Old Testament came into being. Protestant and Catholic teachers agreed in asserting that the Bible was wholly divine, in taking its history for an exact statement of what went on in the earliest ages, and in regarding it as the inerrant philosophy which all Christian men must accept. But outside the Church tradition, whether Catholic or Protestant, there were always thinkers who refused to take this view. Among these we may place the Socinians, whose antitrinitarian views were the constant object of attack on the part of the orthodox. Since the orthodox theory was that the expositor should come to the Bible with his mind already firmly fixed on the main points of the accepted creed, it is not strange that readers who had doubts about the creed should take a view different from the traditional one. We are here concerned only with the attitude of the 'heretical' sect concerning the Old Testament. It seems clear first of all that they did not reject the older revelation. In fact Faustus Socinus published a defence of the authority of Scripture avowedly in contradiction to some who doubted. His main argument concerns the New Testament, but he asserts that the Old Testament is to be accepted on the authority of the New, and he denies that the Jews have corrupted the text of their Bible.

While the Old Testament was thus ostensibly recognized, it was placed in subordination to the New, in contrast to the orthodox view which made both parties of the Bible teach the same doctrine. A sound historical sense showed itself in

the affirmation that the Old Testament does not teach a future life, that it emphasizes work-righteousness, that it laid stress on worldly goods, and that it allowed polygamy. The exhortation to love one's neighbor is there found, to be sure, but the neighbor is the kinsman or fellow-Israelite. All this might be best for Israel in its puerile state, but was done away in Christ. Against the orthodox interpretation which saw in the animal offerings of the Law a substitutionary propitiation, it was urged that an animal could not be a substitute for a man, and that the Law allowed sin-offerings only for unwitting offences. Because of this really historical apprehension of the defects of the earlier revelation, it came about that Socinian writers published no important commentaries on the Old Testament. This is not to throw doubt on the religious earnestness of the sect, for its members held firmly to the belief that the Christian religion is the way to eternal life shown by Jesus Christ. The affirmation has been made that their system by insisting on the complete harmony of reason and Scripture, set up a dogma which was scarcely less a hindrance to the understanding of Scripture than was the orthodox claim that the whole Bible taught the same doctrine. But this is an exaggeration, though the emphasis laid upon the reason did, to a certain extent free exegesis from the chains of dogmatic tradition.

The bitterness of the orthodox protest need not be dwelt upon, but we have already had occasion to note that discussion of an opponent's view often leads to some modification of our own. Grotius has been mentioned as a scholar who had a sounder view than many of his contemporaries. He was assailed as a Socinian, and yet one of his books was an argument against the Socinian position. This was on a doctrinal question and did not directly affect his Old Testament work, though the closer examination of the Biblical text to which he was led in the course of his discussion may have helped to his more historical view. In fact the more historical view was coming to the front even in the Roman Church. It was in this communion that Jean Morin did his

work on the Old Testament text. It was as editor of the Paris Polyglot that he discovered the differences between the Masoretic recension of the Old Testament and the Samaritan copy, and also between the Hebrew text and the versions. The publication of his conclusions led to a sharp polemic which cannot be described here, and it is no part of our task to determine how far he was moved by a desire to discredit the Protestant affirmation of the integrity of the Hebrew original and thereby strengthen the Catholic appeal to tradition.

Of Richard Simon, who next took up the examination of the text, we are certain, for he himself avows that he is seeking to establish the Roman Catholic tradition. Nevertheless, his *Critical History of the Old Testament* is rightly named one of the epoch-making books in Biblical science.[1] In the matter of textual criticism he had a predecessor in Cappellus as well as in Morin. Spinoza also had discussed questions of authorship. Simon treated the subjects as part of the literary history of the Hebrew Bible. In other words, he recognized the important fact of compilation. His theory is that there was a guild of scribes, first appointed by Moses, but continuing throughout the history of Israel, and that they wrote down what was important to be preserved. Moses was the author of the laws which these men recorded, but they took the narrative portions from other sources. During the exile the material they had gathered fell into disorder, and members of Ezra's synagogue rearranged it as best they could, but often had imperfect copies on which to rely. The authority of the books is saved, at least in appearance, by asserting that the scribes who put the material into shape were inspired. In this respect we see the influence of traditional views, but it remains true that two facts of importance were clearly recognized. One was the compilatory nature of the books, the other was the nature of manuscript transmission, which subjected the books to the same influences which we find in other literature. Simon is said to have fortified his position by adducing the Jesuits of Louvain, who had asserted that a

[1] *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament* (1678).

verbal inspiration of the whole Old Testament need not be assumed. It is evident that there was a tendency in various quarters to take a more historical view.

This tendency was accelerated by discussion in the field of philosophy. Descartes had opened a new view by his startling proposition to begin his system with doubt. This was precisely the opposite of the theological principle, and the innovator was assailed on all sides. A little later one Ludwig Meyer published a work, *Philosophia, Sacrae Scripturae Interpres.*[2] The author, who was a physician, maintained that philosophy gives the certain and indubitable knowledge of things, to which the theologians must pay heed in their exegesis. The application was left to others, but the tendency of the work must have been obvious. Perhaps it may be worth while to mention here the essay of Isaac Peyrere entitled *Præ-Adamitæ* (1655), which maintained that there were men before Adam. The book is a symptom of the speculation in which men were indulging in order to do justice to the new knowledge of the world and history, and at the same time to hold to the data of the Old Testament.

Into the field of Old Testament exposition now entered the philosopher Spinoza with his *Tractatus Theologico-politicus.*[3] As a Jew, the author was of course familiar with the Hebrew Bible and with the Jewish commentators, and as a philosopher he was free from the prejudgments of the dogmatic theologians. His treatise was written primarily to defend the right of free inquiry, something the ecclesiastical authorities would have suppressed. The Jewish scholar Aben Ezra had obscurely hinted that certain passages in the Pentateuch indicate post-Mosaic authorship. Spinoza takes up the broader question whether a connected history, like that which extends from Genesis through Second Kings, was not necessarily the work of a man who lived in or after the exile. He con-

[2] The work which was published anonymously is rare, and I have not seen a copy. See the sketch in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie,* Vol. XXI, p. 609f.

[3] Published anonymously in 1650, a little before the work of Simon and Peyrere.

cludes that the only character known to us who could have written the books is Ezra. He finds evidence of compilation also in the two recensions of the Decalogue, and in the inconsistent chronological data. In accordance with his philosophical principles he recognizes the inspiration of the Biblical writers in so far as they inculcate right living, and the things necessary to salvation. As soon as the authorship of this work was known its influence was discounted, for Spinoza the pantheist was abhorred both by Jews and by gentiles. The unfavorable verdict of the Synod in 1671 was followed by an interdict of the States General in 1674. In the long run, however, Spinoza's method of approach must make an impression.

It was in this same century that a beginning was made in the comparative study of religion by the work of John Spencer on the Hebrew laws.[4] Spencer was not a rationalist but a loyal member of the Church of England. What led him to his discussion was the resemblance between many institutions of the Jewish Law on one hand, and rites practised in the so-called heathen religions on the other. Even slight acquaintance with the religions of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, revealed parallel phenomena. Inquiry into the reason of this could not always be satisfied with the theory that other nations had borrowed from Israel; the chronology was in the way, for one thing. Nor was it altogether clear that Satan as the 'ape of God' had induced his followers to caricature the Law divinely given. It was indeed possible for the simple believer to rest in the faith that God had sufficient reasons for His actions, reasons which He has not chosen to reveal. It might even be thought an impertinence to ask for any reason except that the command was given. Timid souls have taken refuge in such a faith whenever the demand has been made for a rational faith. So it was in medieval Judaism when Maimonides attempted to discover reasons for the Law. He was sharply attacked by those who would adhere to the old

[4] *De Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus,* first published in 1685. I use the second edition published at The Hague, 1686.

paths without intruding into the mysteries which the letter of Scripture did not discuss.

But there was now a new spirit in the air. The philosophers were demanding that the rights of the human reason should be respected. Spencer found that the apparent unreason of some of the laws was a stumbling block to Christians, even as it had led some Jews to renounce their religion and become Muslims. In a sense the questions raised had already confronted the early Fathers, on whom the task had fallen to defend the Old Testament revelation while condemning the heathenism which in some respects was so like it. Their refuge was the allegorical interpretation, but this was now discredited, and a new attempt must be made. Spencer asks us to put ourselves in the place of the Israelites just emerging from Egypt, and then see why they needed just such laws as were actually given. The reason is two-fold. First, they must be weaned from idolatry by prohibitions of customs which they had adopted from their gentile neighbors; but since they were not advanced enough to understand a purely spiritual religion they must be allowed, in the second place, to retain some things to which they were attached, lest the break with the past should be too severe for them to undertake. It is unnecessary, therefore, says Spencer, to resort to excessive allegorizing in order to defend the laws, especially since the Biblical text itself gives no ground for such treatment. Symbols and types indeed we must allow, since these are found in all religions, and were especially agreeable to people acquainted with Egyptian thought; and this is the more probable since the revelation given to Moses must be expressed in forms of speech familiar to him.

The author is not always clear in his division between the prohibited rites and those which, because the people were attached to them, were still allowed, but he does bring forward a number of resemblances which the comparative study of religion has confirmed. Thus: pollution by contact with the dead, or with the mother of a new-born child, is certified in many quarters of the globe, and the Israelites sharing this

belief, had provision made for it in their system. Perhaps it was not for this reason alone, for all the laws of clean and unclean were intended to make access to the sanctuary more difficult, and so to enhance the reverence in which the sacred place was held. For this reason purifications before an act of worship were enjoined or practised among many nations, Greeks and Romans, for example, as well as Egyptians. Again, animal sacrifice was the accepted mode of worship and was continued as a concession to the rudeness of the people. Jacob's unction of a sacred stone has its parallels outside of Palestine. Firstfruits were offered to Jehovah by Israelites, as they were to Isis by the Egyptians, to Demeter and Ceres by Greeks and Romans. The joyous festivals of the gentiles, accompanied by sacrificial meals, were likely to seduce the people from their allegiance to their own God, unless similar attractions were offered them in their own religion. The scope of all these institutions, therefore, is to wean the people from idolatry. Circumcision they already regarded as a charm or talisman defending men from the demons. They were allowed to continue it, only having a new interpretation placed upon it, by which it became the sign of the covenant with their God, who was thus in fact certified as their protector.

Further similarities were easily found. The high-places at which the Israelites worshipped remind us of the mountain shrines of Greece. Linen garments prescribed for the priests were the same that were required also in Egypt. The tonsure of the Nazirite is in line with gentile custom. The Ark of the Covenant is similar to the sacred chests which we find in use in Egypt, in the Eleusinian mysteries also, and among Etruscans and Phœnicians. The sacredness of the Ark was fatal to Uzzah; not unlike was the experience of Eurypylus, who was made insane by looking into the chest which contained the image of Dionysus. Even the temple was a concession to the rudeness of the people. Why should God, or an angel bearing His name, inhabit a temple made with hands unless to accommodate Himself to the mood of a peurile and unbelieving people, a people who demanded a God near

at hand and present to their prayers in a sensible manner? The Cherubim with their animal faces are quite like the lions on which the Syrian Goddess (Hera according to Lucian) was seated, or like the bulls of Zeus. The Urim and Thummin were instruments of the oracle, such as we find elsewhere, and the ordeal of jealousy, commanded in Numbers v, was a custom long in use among the gentiles, one which God conceded to Israel lest any miracle or privilege known to other nations should seem to be lacking to His people. The promises of temporal rewards for obedience were adapted to a nation just out of Egypt, as we see in their demand for onions and garlic, whose custom was to pray to various gods for temporal blessings, especially for rain and fruitful seasons.

This formidable array of parallels was adduced to show what God in His condescension allowed the people to retain.[5] On the other hand many apparently unimportant regulations can be explained as due to the desire to separate the people from their old idolatry. Swine were unclean to the Israelite because they were sacred among the Syrians. Similar prohibitions in other religions are due to the sacredness, taboo, of the animals — ram and cow in Egypt, fish in Syria, doves among the Phœnicians, hare and fowl among the early Britons. The lamb was chosen for the Passover sacrifice just because the ram was worshipped by the Egyptians; and the prohibition of boiling the sacrifice was distinctly contradictory to heathen custom. The command not to boil a kid in its mother's milk was given because the Sabeans thus treated a kid in one of their magical rites. The sacrifice of a red cow was enjoined to emphasize Israelite opposition to Egyptian cow-worship. Mixture of seeds, plowing with ox and ass yoked together, interchange of garments by men and women, shaving the head in time of mourning, were forbidden because these things were done in heathendom. The golden calf, borrowed from Egypt, was made an object lesson to teach God's abhorrence of idolatry.

[5] On a similar theory of condescension held by the Fathers see an article by Pinard in the *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, Vol. IX, p. 197ff.

While not all Spencer's affirmations bear the test of time, the majority of them are still regarded as valid evidence of resemblance between Israel's religion and that found elsewhere. Acute as were many of his observations, they were not, in his mind, material for what we now call the comparative study of religions. His purpose was to defend the rationality of the divine legislation in matters which some of his contemporaries were affirming to be absurd. Yet when all is said, his performance is a remarkable one. It was so regarded by the theologians, several of whom undertook to convict him of infidelity. The relation of revelation to reason was in fact coming into discussion as we shall see.

What we have discovered concerning the seventeenth century is that, although orthodox scholasticism in the most stringent terms affirmed that the Old Testament is the direct work of God, who employed the human authors as his pens, yet in many quarters questions were raised about the human element in Scripture. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was questioned by Spinoza, and something like a literary history of the Old Testament books was attempted by Simon. The next step in advance came considerably later, when Astruc published his *Conjectures*.[6] Astruc, like Simon, was a Roman Catholic, but he seems to have no thought of the controversy about tradition and Scripture which so affected the work of his predecessor. In fact, as his title indicates, he was interested in defending the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. What had impressed him was that Moses could not have had personal knowledge of what went on before his birth, and it is unnecessary to suppose that everything he wrote came to him by direct revelation. The conclusion is that he drew upon tradition or upon written sources, and the evidence that it was the latter seemed clear. It was in finding this clue that Astruc showed his originality. He was apparently the first to notice the difference between the divine names used in different strata of the narrative, and

[6] *Conjectures sur les Memoires Originaux dont il paroit que Moyse s'est servi pour composer le Livre de la Genese* (à Bruxelles, 1753).

he thus gave an impetus to the documentary analysis which has been used by the critics ever since, and which, in spite of many attempts to discredit it, is still valid. In the *Conjectures* he separated the sources and discovered that two substantially complete narratives have been combined by a redactor whom of course he supposed to be Moses. He assumed indeed more than two sources, but the one thing which came sharply to view in his analysis was the difference between Jehovist and Elohist. Since he carried his analysis only through the book of Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus, it seems that he was willing to concede that Moses wrote the rest of the five books, but his successors soon discovered that the process of distinguishing the documents could be extended much farther. But without exaggeration, Astruc may be called the founder of modern Biblical criticism.

IX

THE INFLUENCE OF PIETISM

IT IS impossible to follow a strictly chronological order in writing a history of Biblical interpretation. Many and various forces were at work in the period we have been reviewing, and we have not by any means exhausted the list. Spencer was not the only man to call attention to the parallels between the religion of Israel and the religions of other nations. Voss, with his elaborate discussion of the origin of idolatry, showed that attention was given to the subject, and later Alexander Ross issued his *Pansebeia*. The connection of sacred and profane history was treated by Shuckford, who was able to carry his work only down to the time of Moses, and Prideaux, a more profound scholar, published a work with the same title for the later period. One can form some idea of the number of discussions of Biblical questions by examining the great *Thesaurus* of Ugolino.[1] The interest of the orthodox continued to be in such questions as the faith of the antediluvians. The religion of Adam was proved to be the pure doctrine of the Lutheran Church, though in eating the forbidden fruit he broke all the commandments at once. Cain, on the other hand, was shown up as a hypocrite, and all his descendants were stigmatized as atheists. We can hardly wonder that a reaction against discussions of this kind set in.

There are pessimists in all ages, and the complaint that piety is at a low ebb occurs in the seventeenth century as elsewhere. There was perhaps more basis for it then, since the thirty years' war was followed by general depression. The testimony is that the professors of Biblical literature were indifferent to their work, and that the students did not attend

[1] *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum*, 34 volumes folio (1744–69).

such lectures as were given. New interest was aroused by the movement known as Pietism, which sought to revive the religion of the people as distinct from mere dogmatic correctness. It is not necessary to suppose that vital piety had been altogether lacking. Where the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer were taught to the people, there must have been some genuine Christianity. But in the universities at least, it was a minus quantity. A change was brought about largely through the influence of Spener, a genuinely religious nature, whose *Pia Desideria* was published in 1675. That his emphasis on heart-religion was not something new is evident. Luther was a man of religion rather than a man of theology, and Arndt's *Wahres Christentum,* published in 1606, on which Spener delighted to dwell in his youth, was a real book of devotion. We are told also that Baxter's works were much read in Germany in this period, and they, too, are mentioned among those by which Spener was influenced. Such books instead of insisting upon a theological theory of Christ's nature, and the precise effect of his death in propitiating an angry God, dwell rather on the mystical union of the believer with the Saviour, and the consequent life of Christ in the soul. The question of the means by which this life in the soul is kindled is answered by the mystics in different ways, some depreciating all outward means. But Spener was clear that the Bible is the true instrument, in God's hands, of effecting this work. This it does by stimulating the emotion which leads to right conduct, for the test of true Christianity is Christian living. Hence the prime requirement is that the knowledge of the Bible be widely diffused among the people. To this end the training of the clergy must include the stimulation of personal piety, and acquaintance with books of edification.

To carry out his ideas Spener, now pastor in Frankfort, organized private assemblies, at first in his own house, afterwards, when the attendance increased, in the church, similar to what we know as prayer meetings. The purpose of these *Collegia Pietatis* was that believers might provoke each other

to love and good works, for it is the duty of all Christians, not of the clergy alone, to instruct others in the Christian life so far as they have opportunity. Opposition to these 'conventicles' soon developed among the ministers, who felt that these irregular assemblies were an intrusion into their own sphere. In some cases they were prohibited by the civil authorities. In the universities the intimation that the orthodox professors were not doing their full duty was of course resented, and at Leipzig, where Spener was in 1689, the opposition became open conflict. At Halle, however, the faculty was in sympathy with the new movement, the leading member being A. H. Francke. Here were organized the *Collegia Biblica,* the purpose of which was to give an edifying interpretation of the Bible as a whole. "An unprecedented zeal to read the Bible in the original was kindled by their exertions, which in combination with practical piety did much to break the dogmatic spell." [2] The method was to translate a passage, give a simple explanation of the sense, and add practical applications. The method was not altogether new, but when taken up with earnestness by men with the requisite gift it gained in importance.

This is not the place to give further details of the general movement. What interests us is the fact that a new impulse was given to the study of the whole Bible, not primarily as a textbook for dogma, but as the expression of the religious life. The aim of the leaders may be illustrated by a little book published by Francke and afterwards translated into English where it bears the title *Guide to the Reading and Study of the Holy Scriptures.*[3] This work was commended by the well-known Dr. Doddridge as containing the best rules for studying the Scriptures that he had ever seen. It begins by urging that the Bible be read in the original, and the author thinks that a sufficient knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew can be acquired in a short time. What he has at

[2] Diestel, p. 409.

[3] *Manuductio ad Lectionem Scripturæ Sacræ* (1709). I know only the English translation (American edition, Philadelphia, 1828).

heart is that the student should read the whole Bible through, and do this at frequent intervals. Evidently he is deprecating the method of the dogmatic theologians who deal with isolated proof-texts and neglect the scope and connection of the verses. Compendiums and manuals, he says, may respectively possess merit; but they must never preclude the learner from the Scriptures, which should constitute the main object of his attention. Many have erred greatly on this point, and after consuming their time over compendiums, their advancement has been considerably impeded, and they have frequently been prevented from studying the whole of the sacred writings. Elsewhere he warns against depending on the commentaries, though he recommends the judicious use of some that he names. He quotes with approval the saying of Chemnitz: "Let the Scriptures explain themselves, and let their genuine force and native emphasis be carefully collected from the grammatical significance of the words, in order that the sacred testimonies may carry with them their full weight."

It is evident that the author is no rationalist, and the same is true of the immediate circle to which he belonged. He assumes that the Bible is all divine and that its sense is one. He nowhere intimates that there is any difference between Old Testament and New. His doctrine of inspiration would seem to be of the most rigid type, and he expressly asserts in one of his treatises that Christ is the *nucleus* of the whole Scripture. In these respects it seems almost absurd to suppose that Pietism had any influence on the interpretation of the Bible. Such influence it had nevertheless, for it called attention anew to the fact that the Bible is a book of religion, rather than a book of theology. This comes out in the discussion of this very question of inspiration. Francke says: "There are persons perhaps who think the Holy Spirit is wronged when we attribute to the sacred writers affections which are in reality the fruit of His influence, and who think that the Scriptures are not to be referred to these holy men, but to the Holy Ghost who spoke by them. To this we answer that the fact of their being divinely inspired so far from

militating against our position tends itself to convince us that the Holy Spirit kindled sacred affections in the writers' souls. For it is absurd to suppose that in penning the Scriptures they regarded themselves in the light of mere machines, or that they wrote without any feeling or perception that which we read with so great a degree of both." The meaning of the passage is plain — the Bible is the fruit of religious experience, not of a mechanical dictation, and the religious experience is not an intellectual apprehension of certain alleged truths, but a movement of the heart toward God and our fellow men. But an emotional experience is understood only by the man who has its like. In this respect the Pietists were right in declaring that they were reviving the religion of Luther. The deductions they made, however, were put more distinctly than in the earlier time. Taking the Apostle's declaration that the natural man receives not the things of the spirit because they are spiritually discerned, and giving it its face value, these authors affirmed that only the regenerate really understand the Bible. The possibility of erratic and extravagant exegesis was not slow to reveal itself.

Francke lays emphasis on the New Testament rather than the Old. His view of the prophets is that they were primarily predicters — the historical books describe what is past, the prophetical describe what is yet to come. The analogy of faith is emphasized, the agreement and harmony of the divine oracles taken for granted. Where it is not easy to discover the direct bearing of a passage upon the Christian life the reader is advised to pass it over until he attains greater proficiency in spiritual wisdom. The temptation to force an edifying meaning out of or into all parts of Scripture must come inevitably, and the door must be opened to allegory and typology. In emphasizing the analogy of faith, however, Francke was in line with the Reformers and with accepted Protestant doctrine. Spener, as has been said, was no rationalist, and his first dissertation was a refutation of Hobbes. It was blind prejudice which moved his orthodox opponents to set forth 264 doctrinal errors discoverable in his writings.

The undue emphasis laid upon the apocalyptic books by some of his followers is not peculiar to this school, but recurs in every period of history. When all is said we must recognize that the movement gave a healthy impetus to Biblical study.

The Puritan party in England presents a phenomenon not unlike the rise of the Pietists in Germany. But as their activity is largely political, we need not attempt to write their history over again. We are more interested in the opposite tendency, which showed itself in this period. We have seen that the orthodox theory regarded the Bible as a divinely revealed system of philosophy. Since the Author of the Book is also the Author of nature, it was necessary to affirm that the truth revealed in the Bible is one with the truth revealed by a study of nature. Whether in fact they are one began to be questioned as physical science advanced and changed men's view of the universe. At the same time the broadening knowledge of the world of men raised the inquiry whether the Divinity had revealed His philosophy only to the insignificant people of Israel. Spencer's hypothesis concerning the resemblances between the institutions of Israel and those of the heathen could not satisfy all minds. Lord Herbert of Cherbury doubted the damnation of the heathen, and Hobbes questioned the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch. Confidence in the data of reason led to the rejection of allegory and typology, and the plain and literal meaning of the Old Testament revealed shortcomings which were regarded with disdain by the enlightened thinkers of a more advanced age. The reasonableness of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament was indeed conceded. Tindal expressed his conviction in the title of his work: *Christianity as old as the Creation or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature.* It is easy to show that just as in the older discussion the Bible was interpreted by the dogmatic system to which the expositor had given his allegiance, so now it was judged by an alleged religion of nature, a dogma like the others. On the other hand, the view of the identity of the revelation in the Old Testament and that in the New was shattered, and the de-

fenders of tradition were compelled to make some concessions. Evidence is given by Warburton's well known work, *The Divine Legation of Moses,* which defends the inspiration of the Lawgiver precisely on the ground that he did *not* teach the doctrine of a future life.

Lord Herbert had formulated the creed of the religion of nature under five heads: That there is a God; that He ought to be worshipped; that virtue and piety are essential to worship; that a man ought to repent of his sins; and that there are rewards and punishments in a future life. These beliefs he supposed to be innate in every human being, and to be the basis common to all religions. What was more than these, was the addition of designing priests. The debate with the defenders of revelation does not concern us here. All that we care to notice is that the Old Testament bore the brunt of the attack, and thus negatively the way was prepared for a more historical view. In Germany the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* affirmed the impossibility of the narrative in Exodus, and here also the religion of nature had its advocates.

We seem to have got away from the subject of Pietism. Yet the influence of this movement in emphasizing the need of studying the Scriptures for edification rather than for dogma is in evidence throughout this period. Semler, who has been called the father of German rationalism, was of pietistic training, and in fact a truly religious man. He had experienced in himself the edifying effect of reading the Bible, but being of an inquiring mind, he observed in his experience that not all parts of the Book are of equal power. It was natural to ask, and he did ask, why these books were all included in the collection marked off as sacred. In answer he published his essay on the free investigation of the Canon, in which he showed that the process by which the collection called the Old Testament was made must be investigated by the historical method. His later works indicate a broad mind, since he is not unwilling to concede the merits of Simon, Grotius, and Cappellus. In the application of the historical method he undertook an examination of the alleged prooftexts

from the Old Testament, those which were adduced to support the doctrine of the Trinity. This was destructive criticism in the eyes of the dogmatic theologians, and even the pietists must have been distressed by it, but it prepared the way still further for a really historical view.

Our discussion will not be complete unless we notice that the movement known as Pietism has not yet spent itself. Count Zinzendorf was under Spener's influence, and his Moravian Brotherhood carried Pietistic ideas into practice. The Moravians in their turn gave an impulse to John and Charles Wesley, so that the Evangelical revival in England might truthfully be called a Pietistic movement. Not only were the Methodists affected, but other Churches felt the influence. In all denominations the Bible is read for edification. What finds the reader is assimilated as spiritual nourishment, whether in the New Testament (which, however, is really normative) or in the Old. The Psalms and portions of the prophetical books are most highly valued, though the legal sections are made profitable by typological interpretation. The organization of great Bible Societies to circulate the Word of God "without note or comment" may be called a result of Pietism. Other influences are at work, however, and we must give them also some attention.

X

ENDEAVORS AFTER A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

IN THE year 1787 Johann Philip Gabler entered on his work as professor at Altdorf with an oration on *The Right Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology, and of defining the limits of each.*[1] This address was the clearest enunciation that had yet been made of what men had been approaching — the idea of a distinct science of Biblical Theology. The way had been prepared by the critical work which had preceded. The name Biblical Theology was suggested by the Pietists. They, as we have seen, laid emphasis on the reading of the Bible as the source of edification, and distrusted the "dead orthodoxy" which they too often found in the professors at the universities. Since the Bible was professedly the source of doctrine for all Protestants, every system of Protestant theology might claim to be Biblical. The trouble was that so many systems, often at war with each other, had resulted from study professedly based on the Bible. The Pietists, by insisting on the Word of God without philosophical admixture, suggested the idea that there was such a Biblical theology as might claim the allegiance of all believers. Gabler, however, was not a Pietist, and he looked with distrust on the claim of that sect to have superior enlightenment. He was a moderate rationalist and believed fully in the scientific study of the Scriptures. He was a pupil of Griesbach in the New Testament and of Eichorn in the Old, and accepted Scripture and reason as coördinate sources of the same divine revelation. What he insists on in his oration is that Dog-

[1] *De justo discrimine theologiæ biblicæ et dogmaticæ, regundisque recte utriusque finibus,* published in the collection of his minor theological works (1831), Vol. II.

matics should ascertain the universal truths contained in the Bible, arranging them and putting them on a philosophic basis. On the other hand, Biblical Theology must aim to discover the religious ideas contained in the Bible *in their original form* with all their local and individual characteristics. To this end the chronological order must be rightly observed so that the successive stages may stand out clearly. This is an intimation that there was something like development in revelation.

It is evident that Gabler had advanced a long way from the time when men could discover Adam to have been a thoroughly orthodox believer of the Lutheran or the Reformed type. The human element in Scripture was coming to its own, and the intellectual effort, both of Pietists and of Rationalists, was bearing fruit. Among the influences to which Gabler had been subjected, we should also count Herder and his esthetic evaluation of the Old Testament. For the eighteenth century discovered that the resources of the Bible were not exhausted by Pietism, nor yet by either the old orthodoxy or the new rationalism. Herder as a theological student had made the acquaintance of the systems of both parties, Rationalists and Pietists, but as a man of letters, he found little satisfaction in their treatment of their text. This he shows in his first important work, entitled *The Oldest Document of the Human Race.*[2] In this book he takes up the account of the creation as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, and pays his respects to the theologians in this fashion: "From the time of Descartes, Kepler, and Newton, every philosopher has felt it necessary to make a new world, and every philosopho-theologian has made Moses a teacher of this new teaching, a childlike, anxious-to-learn boy in the school of all sorts of metaphysics and recent science." He goes on to show how the brief text of Genesis appears as a little island floating in a deluge of notes, explanations, and expositions, so that the text is lost to view and to understanding. To understand this outburst we must recall to mind that the reconciliation of

[2] *Aelteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts,* 1774.

the Bible and astronomy was at that time much what the reconciliation of the Bible and geology was in the middle of the nineteenth century and later. It reads like the modern affirmation that the Bible is not a text-book of natural science when our author, indignant at all the hypotheses for which Moses is made responsible by the commentators, says: "Moses makes no claim to be a physicist or metaphysician of the eighteenth century. "In the beginning God created" — Moses has no need to speculate on beginnings, on creation out of nothing. He turns his back on all such speculations and yet men insist on hanging them on his words. And if he can go his way without the help of the metaphysicians why may not they go their way without his? Let them discover what they can and make it known. God's way may be different, as in fact it is. His revelation presents us with a picture in the language of humanity, a picture such as every human being can understand. His ways are different from our ways; may it not be that His ways are higher than ours?"

Recent exposition has emphasized the literary study of the Bible. The point of view is, however, as old as Herder, and in fact older, for he had a predecessor in Lowth who in 1753 published his lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews. The importance of this work is that it treated the Hebrew poetry as poetry, examining it by the standards applied to other poetry, especially that of the Greek and Latin classics. This book was republished in Germany and undoubtedly influenced Herder's next work, that on the Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry. In this book, which was intended for intelligent laymen as well as for clergymen, the author endeavors to set forth the real beauty of the Old Testament books, especially the Psalms and Job. It is a succession of dialogues in which one of the interlocutors is a young man who has been compelled to study Hebrew in the dry grammatical method then in vogue in the class-room, and has been disgusted with what he calls its barbarity. The other character represents Herder's own view, leads his friend to look with unprejudiced view on these monuments of ancient thought, and reveals to him

unsuspected beauties. The scornful criticism of the imperfections of the Bible in which the older rationalism had indulged was thus counteracted and at least it was shown that the Book was not negligible.

In some of his later works Herder lays more stress on the organic nature of Biblical thought, that is, the idea of progressive revelation was coming to the front. Evidence is the brief but important essay of Lessing entitled *The Education of the Human Race.* Account is here taken of the rudimentary condition of a nation of slaves escaping from Egypt, where, if there was any spiritual religion, it was hidden from the common people. To such a people God must reveal Himself gradually, giving them only what they were able to comprehend. Warburton's theory, that the silence of Moses concerning a future life was a proof of divine wisdom rather than an objection to the revelation, is here taken up. The claim of the rationalist was recognized in the assertion that revelation only gave men that which they could discover by reason, but the author held that it gave the ideas sooner than they would otherwise be apprehended. The view of revelation as progressive was taken up again by Herder in his *Letters on the Study of Theology*,[3] addressed to students. He begins here by saying that the best study for the theologians is the study of the Bible, and he insists that the Bible must be studied as a human book. Especially in the use of the so-called prooftexts, one must always be careful to get the words in their connection, and must understand the author from his own time and circumstances. As he puts it elsewhere: The Bible is an oriental book; to understand it we must leave the stuffy room of the German student and walk out into the clear air of the East, and look at the picture as it here reveals itself. There we do not reason out the nature of God; we feel His presence near us and are glad.

One who follows the course of Biblical science during this period must see that men were feeling their way to a more adequate treatment of the Hebrew literature. The very va-

[3] *Briefe das Studium der Theologie Betreffend* (1780).

riety of treatises which were published — discordant and hostile to each other as they often were — shows that no one treatment exhausted the richness of the material. The Bible is the source of doctrine to the theologian, of edification to the believer, of history to the student of human affairs, of inspiration and enjoyment to the literary man. To the professed interpreters of the text, that is, to the teachers of theology, this variety of view was confusing. The inquiry forced itself upon the attention: What after all is the *essential* thing in the Book, the secret of its power? The endeavor to answer this question led to the development of the distinct study which Gabler had so well defined in his address already mentioned, that is, *Biblical Theology*. Some time before Gabler's attempt a book under this title had been published by Zachariae, one now forgotten, but which in its time went through at least three editions.[4] The author realizes that his title may surprise some of his readers, the term Biblical Theology being interpreted as though it insinuated that other theologians were unbiblical. He goes on to explain that at first he thought only of publishing an exposition of the *dicta probantia*. But the plan had grown under his hand, chiefly because his experience in lecturing on the Bible had shown him that often the meaning of a word or passage was not that which theology had attached to it. The Hebrew way of thinking and speaking, he goes on to say, is so different from ours that we often have difficulty in apprehending the exact sense of an author, and even in the New Testament Hebrew forms of thought are often discoverable, and the authors being Jews, the same reasoning will apply to them as to the writers of the Old Testament. The ideas, therefore, which we from our childhood have been accustomed to attach to the words of Scripture, need to be revised in the light of Scripture itself, interpreted by the best Hebrew scholarship. Self-evident as these considerations may seem to us, they were in fact the attempt to take the new point of view. What the author is proposing

[4] *Biblische Theologie, oder Untersuchung des Biblischen Grundes der Vornehmsten Theologischen Lehren* (1775).

is a re-examination of the whole Biblical basis of dogmatic theology, with the desire to learn what the Bible itself teaches; for as Christians, we are obliged to accept what the Bible teaches. He even adds that as a teacher in the Lutheran Church he must keep within the bounds set by the creeds of the Church. He has not therefore escaped from the bonds of dogma, and to this extent cannot be said to have attained a really historical point of view. His definition shows this plainly enough: "By a Biblical Theology I mean an exact definition of all theological doctrines with the formulae (*Lehrsätzen*) belonging to them, and the correct understanding of these formulae according to their proofs in Holy Scripture." At the same time, however, he admits that each Biblical book has its particular aim, different from that of other books, and that this aim is directed primarily at the state of things existing when the book was written. This he qualifies by saying that the divine aim in giving the whole Scripture does not interfere with the particular design of the human author. In his carrying out of his plan he further shows his limitations by mingling texts from both parts of the Bible, so that we may agree with one of his critics who says that he has no idea of historical development. His attempt is one of those endeavors of which we have so many in the history of our science, which concede something to the new views while holding on to as much as possible of the old. In fact down to more recent times the dogmatic theologians have thought of Biblical Theology as the science which puts into systematic form the results of Biblical study, and then presents them to the other and higher science, *i. e.*, Dogmatics.

It is unnecessary to describe the various treatises which came from the press under the title of Biblical theologies during the period now under review. The most of them appeared in Germany because Germany had a large number of universities, each with its faculty of theology, because Germany encouraged research in its professors, and because in Germany there was freedom of teaching. One book may be mentioned, however, on account of the eminence of its author. This is

De Wette's *Biblical Dogmatics*,[5] first published in 1813. It is perhaps significant that the book is dedicated to Schleiermacher, and no less so that it begins with a discussion of the nature of religion. The traditional orthodoxy, as we have seen, was wholly possessed by the idea that all the statements of the Bible were intended to give divine sanction to certain creed statements, and on the other hand the current rationalism stigmatized as fraud, or as wholly unworthy of God, everything in the Bible which did not agree with an alleged system of reason. De Wette, who was a competent Hebrew scholar, saw that both parties do wrong to the Bible. The Bible is a book of religion, and religion is more than a creed and different from a metaphysic. This point of view had already been taken by Herder, but is now more distinctly formulated. Three distinct stages of Biblical religion are named — Hebraism, Judaism and early Christianity. Considering the state of criticism in De Wette's time it is not strange that he retains the idea of Moses as founder of the theocracy, though he sees that we have no really historical documents from the Mosaic age. He thinks of Samuel as the restorer of the theocracy, a theory which it is now easy to criticize. But when all is said, his work has an honorable place in the history of Old Testament science.

One other work may be mentioned here because of its clear enunciation of the proper method of study. This is the Biblical Theology of von Cölln, published in 1836. This author demands: First, careful distinction of the periods and of the sources, and separation of direct and indirect testimony; secondly, strict adherence to the view and conception of the several writers; thirdly, recognition of the symbolical and mythical forms in which the ideas are clothed, and their relation to the pure ideas as well as to the teacher's own convictions; fourthly, explanation of the relation between the teachings and the outward circumstances of the people at the various epochs; lastly, the tracing of the origin of the ideas in

[5] *Biblische Dogmatik alten und neuen Testaments, oder kritische Darstellung der Religionslehren des Hebraismus, des Judentums und Urchristentums.*

the very earliest sources. We can find little fault with this program even at the present day. Our main advance has been in the clearer analysis of the sources and their more exact arrangement in chronological order. In this respect Vatke's work, which was published a year before that of von Cölln, marks an epoch, but discussion of its importance must be postponed for the present. The result of the various works we have discussed in this chapter was to establish the idea of a Biblical Theology as a distinct science, an idea not yet everywhere accepted, but one which is making its way even in conservative circles.

XI

THE BISHOP'S PROBLEM

FEW MEN now living can recall the sensation produced in the English-speaking world by the publication of Colenso's book: *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Examined.*[1] The sensation is evidence that critical questions had not attracted much attention in England and this country. It shows also that the charge frequently made, that the critics are mere imitators or echoes of German rationalists, is without foundation, for Colenso was innocent of any taint of rationalism. He was brought face to face with the question concerning the Pentateuch by incidents entirely foreign to Germany or indeed to Europe. His story is so interesting that it may be repeated here.

J. W. Colenso was Bishop of Natal in South Africa, and interested himself in giving the Bible to the native Zulus. In translating the Old Testament he had the help of an intelligent native, "one with the docility of a child but the reasoning powers of a man of mature age." When they came to the story of the flood the helper asked whether it was true that Noah had gathered the beasts from all countries and carried them in the ark. The Bishop had some knowledge of geology and had had some misgivings about an universal deluge; but he had contented himself with the explanations or hypotheses of the commentators. Now brought face to face with an inquiring mind the difficulties in the way of a literal acceptance of the narrative recurred with new force, and he was obliged to confess that the story was not, in the proper sense of the word, history. This was only the beginning. When they came

[1] The first part was published in 1862, and later volumes appeared at intervals down to 1879.

to the book of Exodus the translator's attention was called to the law: "If a man smite his slave or his maid with a rod and he die under his hand he shall surely be punished; notwithstanding if he continue a day or two he shall not be punished: for he is his money" (Ex. xxi:20f.). The Zulu, who knew of the lot of the black man when in the power of a white master, was quick to feel the injustice of such a law, and asked whether it was true that God had given such a law by direct revelation. This opened up the whole question of the divine and infallible inspiration of this part of the Bible, and the Bishop, without knowledge of what the critics had been doing, set out to examine the phenomena of the books. This he did in his own way. Being an expert in mathematics (several text-books in arithmetic and algebra had been published by him) his attention was naturally directed to the mechanical difficulties of the narrative as it stands.

The point of departure was of course the statement that Israel went out of Egypt with a force of six hundred thousand fighting men, which would imply a total population of at least two million human beings. That this number was taken seriously by the author or compiler is proved by its repetition in more than one place, and by the detailed census and its summation as recorded in the early chapters of Numbers. Various attempts to explain away the data — such as the suggestion that *tents* should be read in place of *thousands* — were unknown to Colenso and need not have influenced him in any case. The text is plain, and the difficulty is equally plain. Think of miracle as we may, we must still hold that a narrative of fact must be consistent with the known conditions of space and time. What now is implied in the sojourn of two million people in a single encampment, or rather in a series of encampments, in an arid desert such as we know the desert of Sinai to have been? That the desert then was what the desert is now, is evident from the Biblical writer's own description — a waste howling wilderness. That Colenso had no objection to miracle as miracle seems evident, for the supposition that a whole nation was fed by manna, a substance

which was found on the ground six days out of every week, for the space of forty years, does not seem to have shocked him. In fact he says that he does not find insuperable difficulties with regard to the miracles or supernatural revelations recorded in the book, "but solely that I cannot as a true man consent any longer to shut my eyes to the absolute palpable self-contradictions of the narrative." One of these concerned the priest and his duties. Making a reasonable allowance of space for each family, we find that the camp must have been twelve miles across in each direction. In its centre was the sanctuary served by three priests, Aaron and his two sons. But there was a specific direction that the priest should daily carry out the ashes from the altar to a place outside the camp, and also, in the case of the prescribed sin-offering, that he should carry out the skin, flesh, and offal of the victim, a bullock, to the place where the ashes were thrown and there burn them. The amount of labor thus thrown upon the priests, in addition to their other duties can be imagined, or rather will be seen to be beyond human strength. To this add the difficulty of sanitation for such a camp, and the allegation that the water-supply came from a single spring and we shall agree with the Bishop.

For another instance look at the matter of sacrifice (I am giving Colenso's argument). A number of offerings are enjoined which for so great a number of people and so small a number of priests must be burdensome. For example, the Passover must be observed every year by the sacrifice of a lamb or kid for each family or each group of ten people. This implies of course the provision of two hundred thousand animals for this occasion. But, according to experienced sheep-masters, this would imply a total of two million sheep for the sojourners in the desert. How could such a multitude find sustenance in the desert? Allowing that the people were miraculously fed, can we suppose that the cattle were similarly provided for? The narrative nowhere intimates anything of the kind. Another numerical calculation, which need not here be reproduced in detail, shows the inconsistency of the

number of firstborn males according to the census, when compared with the number of the people as a whole, and the probable number of births in a community of the size alleged. In addition there is the often urged difficulty of supposing the seventy men of Jacob's clan who came into Egypt to have increased to a great nation in the time which had elapsed. In short, wherever we turn, the narrative as it stands presents difficulties of the most serious kind.

It does not help us much to assert, as the conservative scholars are inclined to do, that these are the oft-refuted objections of infidel enemies of Scripture. The striking thing is that, however often refuted, the objections recur to every new investigator who takes his task seriously; and that Colenso was not an infidel we are quite sure. From the modern point of view we are able to account for the phenomena which gave him so much trouble. The inconsistencies of the narrative are due to the combination of documents of different dates, embodying different points of view. The genealogical and chronological data are for the most part taken from the Priestly writer who was fully dominated by a theory. According to this theory Israel came out of Egypt a full-grown nation, such a nation as afterwards dwelt in Palestine under the rule of David. The author projected his ideal back into the desert period, sublimely indifferent to considerations of time and space. His work is not history, but apocalypse, apocalypse reversed, that is, dating the golden age in the past instead of in the future.

It is unnecessary to analyze Colenso's continuation of his work. The attacks made upon him led him to examine the essays of continental scholars, and the most of their results he was willing to accept. His hypothesis that Samuel was the author of the priestly document, and that Jeremiah wrote Deuteronomy has found no advocates. The significance of his work is, as already intimated, its demonstration of what an unbiased observer who takes up the Hebrew story will find there. That he may still hold to the religious value of the Old Testament Colenso attests. The incident suggests that

it is unfortunate that the question most earnestly, not to say bitterly, debated in his time and afterwards, has turned about the 'authenticity' or 'genuineness' of the Pentateuch. Had critical inquiry begun with the other books, so that the student could get some acquaintance with Hebrew historical methods, the shock in discovering the composite nature of the Pentateuch would have been less. But theological opinion in England was still dwelling on the inerrancy of Scripture, and an attack on the credibility of any part of the narrative contradicted that doctrine. Colenso points out that theological teachers in the Church of England were committed to this doctrine, and he quotes from the Bishop of Ripon the declaration that the Bible is the infallible record of the mind and will of God — "The Bible like its Author is pure unchangeable truth, truth without admixture of error." That a Bishop of the Church should deny this made the scandal.

The ecclesiastical remedy for heresy is not argument, but legal process. An indictment was soon found against Colenso and presented to the Metropolitan Bishop at Capetown. The case was complicated by the fact that Colenso had published a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans "from a missionary point of view," in which he departed from the accepted teaching of the Church concerning the substitutionary nature of the atonement. This commentary was made the basis of the first charge, but as it lies outside our province, we need give it no attention. The charge based on the inquiry into the historicity of the Pentateuch is: "That in the book *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined* the Holy Scriptures are spoken of as a merely human book, that the genuineness, authenticity, and truth of certain books of Scripture in whole or in part are denied, and that the writer maintains that our Blessed Lord was ignorant and in error on the subject of the authorship and age of the different portions of the Pentateuch." The argument on the charges followed the line familiar to us in other cases of ecclesiastical process. In such cases the prosecutor points out that the question before the court is not the truth or falsity of the

statements made by the accused, but their consistency with the law of the Church. Since the law of the Church contained in her formularies took shape some centuries ago, when critical inquiry was still in its infancy, it is easy to show that new theories are inconsistent with it. The law cited in this case is contained in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, in the catechism of the Church of England and in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. The Articles quoted do not in so many words affirm the inerrancy of Scripture, but may validly be held to imply it since they forbid the ordaining of anything contrary to God's Word Written, or the expounding of one place of Scripture so as to make it repugnant to another. Since Colenso's work had pointed out the inconsistencies in various parts of the narrative, the court held that he was condemned by the Article, and gave judgment accordingly.

Bishop Gray, before whom the charges were brought, pronounced his decision to the effect that the opinions set forth in the books of Colenso contravened and subverted the Catholic faith as set forth in the Articles of Religion. His sentence was that the Bishop of Natal be deposed from his office and forbidden to exercise any divine office within the metropolitan province of Capetown. Opportunity was, however, given to the Bishop to retract his errors within a term of four months from the date of sentence, within which period the full, unconditional, and absolute retraction must be made in writing and deposited with the Registrar of the diocese. As Colenso refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the court, and of course the validity of the sentence, the Metropolitan went so far as to pronounce the greater excommunication.

Colenso was not present at the trial, having sailed for England. His protest against the jurisdiction of the court was presented by one of his friends, who also gave notice that the sentence would be disregarded as being null and void. The Church of England being established, an appeal to the Crown could be taken, and this course was followed. The result was that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council pronounced the proceedings of the alleged court at Cape-

town null and void. Colenso returned to his diocese, where he was warmly welcomed, and where he continued to preach. He suffered, however, from the almost unanimous hostile criticism of the bishops of his own church, as well as from the action of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. Both these organizations had given aid to his missionary work, and both now withdrew their support. More personal pain we may suppose him to have suffered by the loss of the friendship of F. D. Maurice. Maurice was well known as leader of the more liberal party in the Church, and might have been expected to plead for toleration. But his action showed what has often been observed elsewhere, namely that those most tenacious in defending their own liberty may be unwilling to grant liberty to others.

The incident which I have related at some length bears on the history of Old Testament interpretation simply because it shows how a mind innocent of German or other rationalism is driven to take the critical position as soon as it makes a careful examination of the facts of Scripture. As Colenso himself observes, he advanced nothing new. This is perhaps too strong a statement, for his exact presentation of the mathematical difficulties was more striking than any that had preceded. And they are convincing. It would be interesting to know how many of the Bishops of the Church of England in this twentieth century would assent to the judgment of the Bishop of Capetown.

It must not be thought that English opinion was entirely in the dark concerning critical opinion until Colenso so emphatically called attention to its problems. *Essays and Reviews* had been published two years before his book appeared, and had aroused uneasiness in conservative minds. One of these essays reproduced Lessing's thought of the education of the race as a gradual process, so that the earliest stages of revelation would appear imperfect when viewed in the light of more advanced ages. Another discussed at length Bunsen's Biblical Researches, which certainly departed from the traditional

views. Finally Jowett's discussion of the interpretation of Scripture took broad ground, although it did not enter specifically upon questions of Old Testament criticism. It may be that the uneasiness caused by these essays gave strength to the agitation against Colenso. Before leaving the subject, we may notice a predecessor whose words gave comfort and encouragement to our Bishop, and whose case was even more remarkable than his. This man was Alexander Geddes, a Scottish priest of the Roman Catholic Church. He made a new translation of the Bible into English, and added a volume of *Critical Remarks*.[2] Their significance is the same that we have remarked in the case of Colenso; they show how a mind not inclined to rationalism, but candid and reflective, is led by an unbiased examination of the phenomena to take the critical position. Colenso quotes the passage in which he found encouragement, as follows:

> May I blameless examine the works of Christian doctors and historians by the common rules of criticism, explode their sophistry, combat their rash assertions, arraign them of credulity, and even sometimes question their veracity — and yet be obliged to consider every fragment of Hebrew Scripture for a series of a thousand years, from Moses to Malachi, every scrap of prophecy, poesy, minstrelsy, history, biography, as the infallible communications of heaven, oracles of divine truth? Truly this is to require too much from credulity itself.

That Geddes suffered the penalty of his rashness, and was condemned by his ecclesiastical superiors, will cause us no surprise. The cases of Loisy and Tyrrell are fresh in our minds, and are parallel enough to need no elucidation.

[2] *The Holy Bible or the Books Accounted Sacred by Jews and Christians*, two volumes containing the historical books (1792–1797). The *Critical Remarks* published in 1800 are on the Pentateuch.

XII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WELLHAUSEN

HISTORICAL research proceeds on the hypothesis, first that from such remains as have come down to us it is possible to discover, to a certain extent, what actually happened in the past; and secondly, that the events of the past can be traced in their orderly sequence, so as to show us the law of human progress. In order to accomplish his task, therefore, it is of the first importance that the historian arrange the documents that he studies in their proper order of time. The higher criticism which has been so much objected to when applied to the Bible, is simply the method by which the literature is brought into this proper order. The length of time which it has taken the critics to reach this end is due in part to the complicated process which the Hebrew literature has gone through, and which is described in outline in the first of these essays, in part to the Jewish tradition which in an uncritical age insisted that the Mosaic Code was really the foundation of the Hebrew commonwealth, and therefore the most important part of divine revelation. This tradition passed over to the Church and became one of its accepted beliefs to interfere with which was regarded with horror, as if it were sacrilege. Spinoza's doubts concerning the authorship of the books ascribed to Moses was attributed to his 'atheistic' prejudice against all revealed religion. Simon's demonstration that the books had been subject to the same accidents of transmission as other ancient writings was discounted, at least among Protestants, by the fact that he was a Roman Catholic. Astruc at last found a key which was apparently allowed to pass because it only proved (as applied by him, that is) that Moses made use of written sources older

than his own time. But his hypothesis was taken up by Eichhorn, who with German thoroughness carried the analysis through the Pentateuch.[1]

Eichhorn seems to have been the first to point out that the 'higher criticism' that is, literary as distinguished from textual criticism, is an established method of investigating ancient writings. It is unnecessary to give details of his analysis. The two main streams of narrative pointed out by Astruc were readily separated, and the method so commended itself to contemporary scholars that they at once threw themselves into the work of analysis. Ingenuity was in fact so applied that the books under review threatened to disintegrate into a number of heterogeneous fragments. This phase passed, however, and there came to be substantial agreement as to the Pentateuchal sources. Meanwhile the chasm which opened between Dogmatic and Biblical Theology was bridged by the specific definition of Gabler as already related. Here the question of the age of the different elements which have been combined in our Old Testament is fundamental and it is on this point that the critics were long in reaching an agreement. It came to be admitted that four sources are traceable in the Pentateuch, the most important, at least to Jewish thinking, being the one known as P, that is the priestly code contained in the books of Leviticus and Numbers. Since this document furnished the framework into which the others had been fitted, it was natural to suppose that it was the earliest in point of time. Ewald's important *History of the People of Israel* was vitiated by this assumption. Reflection shows, however, that genealogical and statistical material, such as characterizes the Priestcode, is a comparatively late development, whereas folklore, such as we find in the patriarchal stories of Genesis, is more primitive.

The merit of pointing out the true order of the documents

[1] *Einleitung ins Alte Testament.* The first edition which I have not seen was published in 1780, second edition 1790. It is perhaps significant that the only work of Eichhorn which was translated into English was an essay in which he argues that the authors of the Old Testament were not impostors (in *Essays and Dissertations in Biblical Literature,* New York, 1829).

belongs to Vatke, whose book *"Religion of the Old Testament developed according to the Canonical Books"* [2] appeared in 1835. Vatke was a thoroughgoing disciple of Hegel, and his work is saturated with that philosopher's view of the course of human history, so much so that it is hardly intelligible to one unacquainted with the system. The significance of the author does not lie in his philosophy, but in his view of Israel's development. Two books are emphasized by him as decisive. These are Deuteronomy and Ezekiel. First of all, both books are later than the time of the great Prophets, Deuteronomy belonging to the age of Josiah, Ezekiel of course to the Exile. Deuteronomy had been correctly dated before, but the bearing of Ezekiel on the question had been overlooked. On reflection it is seen that this prophet's work is unintelligible if there was a ritual law already in existence. What he does is to give a fully developed scheme for Israel's future. But, priest as he is, he could not have done this had there been in existence an elaborate legislation such as is contained in Leviticus and Numbers. What he would have done in that case is clear — he would have referred his people to the Law already in their hands. To do anything else would have been sacrilegious. So far from knowing anything of such a law, he asserts that the law given in the desert was not good. The conclusion of Vatke is that the true order of Israel's legislation is Deuteronomy, then Ezekiel, and last of all the Priest-code. This conclusion however was ignored for thirty years and more, mainly because it was accompanied by speculation on the idea of history and the self-realization of the Absolute, couched in the technical language of the Hegelian philosophy. Moreover, the attention of conservative theologians having been called to the progress of critical inquiry, an attempt was made to stem the tide, and for some time reactionary literature held the centre of the stage.

The protagonist of the conservative school was Hengstenberg, an able scholar thoroughly trained in the orthodox tradition, and one of those logical natures which when they have

[2] The first volume was never followed by a second.

adopted a system, cannot allow a single point in it to be questioned, lest the whole structure fall to pieces. His *Beiträge* were directed against all the assertions of the critics, affirming the whole of the Pentateuch to be the work of Moses, the whole of Isaiah to be by the author whose name comes at the head of the book, Daniel to have been written by Daniel himself, and the whole of Zechariah by one author. To doubt any of these propositions was held to be a denial of the Christian faith. Moreover, the Old Testament he held to be primarily and chiefly a book of prophecies of the coming of Christ. To prove this was the purpose of his best known work, the *Christology of the Old Testament.*[3] The presupposition of this work is indicated by the title and is set forth with all desirable distinctness in the introduction. It is wholly dogmatic, asserting that the incarnation is the centre of all divine institutions for the salvation of fallen man, and that the Old Testament is a succession of revelations designed to keep the expectation of believers fixed on that event still in the future. In other words, the Old Testament is made a textbook of orthodox Protestant theology.

The influence of Hengstenberg was considerable, perhaps more marked in England and America than in Germany. For some decades the German literature made accessible to readers in these two countries was that of the conservative school, and the hope was entertained that the Churches might be protected by this literature from the inroads of rationalism. In fact, as we have seen, the tone in both countries was conservative, and this may be illustrated by the fact that a standard work for nearly three-quarters of the nineteenth century was Horne's *Introduction,* and that Samuel Davidson, who attempted to introduce some of the critical views into a new edition of that work was stigmatized as a heretic, and removed from his professorship in the Independent College, Manchester. The prominence of Franz Delitzsch in Germany, and the preva-

[3] *Christologie des Alten Testaments und Commentar über die Messianischen Weissagungen der Propheten,* 1829. An English translation appeared in 1836, and another in 1871.

lence of conservative views in Great Britain and this country seemed ominous for any advance in Old Testament scholarship. It is for this reason that the importance of Wellhausen should be borne in mind. This importance consists in his forceful and lucid presentation of the view advanced by Vatke forty years earlier. Not that he was directly dependent on Vatke, for he was a pupil of Ewald. But not satisfied with his teacher's solution of the problem of Old Testament history, he worked over the material afresh. The first volume of his History of Israel[4] was the result. This book begins at once with the statement of the problem to be solved, which is whether the Law contained in the Pentateuch is the point of departure for the history of ancient Israel or for the history of Judaism, that is of the religious community which survived the Babylonian catastrophe. Various lines of argument are then taken up and are found to converge upon the position already stated by Vatke.

One striking example must impress every reader. This is the account of the crowning of the young king Joash as related in Kings, and also in Chronicles. The two narratives are printed in parallel columns and the lesson is plain — the Chronicler has allowed his preference for the Levites and his scrupulosity as to the defilement of the temple to color his version, so as to make the incident something quite different from that related by the earlier author. In one case the young king is placed upon the throne by the royal body-guard, acting under the direction of the priest of the temple. In the Chronicler's version, the body-guard does not appear, but all is done by the Levites, and special care is taken that none but consecrated persons shall enter the sacred building. The significance of the comparison is the demonstration it gives that between the composition of the two books the priestly point of view has come into force. But this point of view is exactly that of the Levitical legislation, contained in the middle books of the Pentateuch. In the third century

[4] As it first appeared (1878), the book bore the title *Geschichte Israels.* Later issues changed this to *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels.*

B.C. (the date of Chronicles) a Jewish writer could not conceive that the royal body-guard, made up of laymen and probably of foreigners, could be admitted to the temple, or (what he would regard as worse) that the chief priest could make use of them when he had a large number of Levites at his command. The conclusion is that in his time the priestly legislation was fully recognized, but that when the account in Kings was written, which could not have been much before 750 B.C., the chief priest had no scruples about admitting unconsecrated persons to the temple. The bearing of Ezekiel's regulation on the question is obvious, for he it was who denounced the pre-exilic practice.

This is only one of several lines of evidence which are more distinctly brought out in Wellhausen's work, more distinctly than in any previous discussion. The reception of the book was twofold: conservative scholars accused the author of an evolutionary bias which vitiated his discussion. The charge is not likely to weigh very heavily in these days, when evolution is widely accepted as the process which is discoverable in history as well as in nature. In the second place, the alternative between the traditional theory of the authorship of the sacred books was put in this form: Either Moses (for the crucial point was still the authenticity of the Pentateuch) wrote the books attributed to him, or else they are a fraud and a forgery. Similarly the demonstration that the work of more than one author was contained in the book of Isaiah was met with the same alternative. The answer is of course that the books being the result of a complicated historical process, the main thing is to apprehend the process. Doubtless all the authors, editors, and compilers acted in good faith, although their methods were not those of our own day. The charge of approaching their subject with a preconceived bias could be brought against the conservatives as we have already seen illustrated in Hengstenberg. But recrimination is not argument.

Wellhausen generously declines to claim originality for himself. That he had a predecessor in Vatke we have noticed,

although Vatke's presentation was in such form that it did not appeal even to scholars. The correct order of the documents had been suspected by Reuss, though he had not ventured to publish his view because it differed from the one generally accepted. Graf also had had an inkling of the same thing, and Kuenen had felt his way to the Wellhausen position about the same time with his German contemporary. When the position was clearly and forcibly presented by Wellhausen, nearly all scholars who recognized the legitimacy of applying critical methods to the Old Testament were convinced. Not only in Germany, but in France, Holland, Great Britain, and America, the theory made its way. So cautious a scholar as Driver, and so thoughtful a one as W. Robertson Smith adopted it. At the present day it is as nearly the established theory of Old Testament history as can be expected in a field where many men are at work. Boasts that it has been refuted are heard every now and then, but the unprejudiced observer will discover that they are at least premature. The only attack which needs to be considered affirms that he has not given due weight to the evidence from Babylonia and Assyria. The claim made by these opponents is that monotheism is not the exclusive possession of Israel, but is found in Mesopotamia and also in Egypt. In reply, it is enough to say that, allowing the more advanced thinkers in both countries to have attained something like a monotheistic belief, such a belief had no influence on the religion of the people; whereas in Israel the striking thing is that after a long evolution the whole nation had arrived at a point where they insisted that loyalty to the one God meant rejection of all polytheistic and idolatrous rites. Wellhausen's merit was that on the basis of the literature of Israel he traced the process by which this stage of religion was reached. Thus and thus alone, certainly not by a shadowy Babylonian or Egyptian monotheism, was the way prepared for Christianity.

XIII

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

WITHOUT claiming that Biblical science has no more to learn, we may pause here to see exactly what may now be fairly regarded as the assured results of the process we have been tracing. The men whose labors we have examined cannot be accused of being obsessed by a godless evolutionary theory. They include loyal members of many Christian Churches — Simon, Astruc, Geddes and Loisy (Roman Catholics), Kuenen and Oort (Dutch Reformed), Wellhausen, Kautzsch and Kittel (German Protestants), Colenso and Driver (Episcopalians), W. Robertson Smith, Briggs and Francis Brown (Presbyterians) — not to mention many now living. The outline of Israel's religious history (for this is our main concern) on which these men would agree, is as follows:

Something over three thousand years ago a few Bedawin clans sojourned in the desert south of Canaan. Moved by a religious as well as an economical impulse, they attacked the inhabitants of Palestine. The conquest was made gradually, sometimes by open warfare, but to a considerable extent by peaceful penetration, in which the newcomers amalgamated with the older inhabitants. The religion which they brought with them was the worship of their tribal God, but in Canaan they learned the way of the divinities of the land, adopting the sanctuaries and ritual of the older inhabitants. Protest against this syncretism was made by the prophets, some of whom were uncompromising adherents of the old nomadic religion, some were moved by patriotism and a desire to preserve Israel's individuality, some were social reformers who saw that the will of God is ethical rather than ritualistic. At

a favorable moment the prophetic party secured the aid of Josiah, king of Judah, in putting through a reform of religion, which, however, was followed by a reaction. The calamity which came with the Babylonian supremacy was construed as punishment for this reaction. In the exile, therefore, the religious leaders devoted their efforts to a more thorough reconstruction of the ritual, with the idea of thus protecting the religion from contamination. The result was post-exilic Judaism, which was confirmed in its triumph by the events of the Maccabean struggle.

This presentation of the history is based on the critical examination of the documents, which shows that the literature is correctly arranged in the following order: (1) The folk-stories of the Patriarchs; (2) The works of the early prophets, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah; (3) Deuteronomy; (4) Ezekiel; (5) the Priestly stratum of the Pentateuch. To test the theory we may try several lines of inquiry.

I. THE PLACE OF WORSHIP

In the book of Kings we find a recurrent phrase: "The people still sacrificed at the highplaces." These highplaces (*bama,* plural *bamoth,* is the technical name) are regarded by the author as illegitimate sanctuaries, for to him the one authorized place of worship is the temple at Jerusalem. How many of these shrines there were is indicated by Jeremiah, who complains that they were on every high hill and under every green tree. But the idea of Jeremiah and the author of Kings that the worship at these places was a sign of apostasy, the people having received a specific command against any but the one sanctuary, is untenable. There are in fact indications that the highplaces were at one time recognized as legitimate. When Elijah accuses the people of defection he says to Yahweh, the God of Israel: The sons of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine *altars,* and slain thy prophets. The passage implies that there were many such altars and shows that the defection was not abandon-

ment of the one altar at Jerusalem, but neglect of the many shrines throughout the country. Even in this case the accusation is too sweeping, for the prophet is informed that seven thousand of his people are still faithful. Had Elijah supposed that the Law insisted upon one place of worship, he would have used very different language. Moreover, when the test came, instead of exhorting the people to seek Yahweh at Jerusalem, he rebuilt one of these very local altars and invoked the presence of the divinity there. When Solomon would inquire the will of God he went to Gibeon and sacrificed at the great *bama* a thousand burnt offerings. Since he received the revelation that he desired, no doubt he and the people were confirmed in their belief that this at any rate was a place at which God could be worshipped. The author of Kings endeavors to excuse the act, which, on his principle, was unjustified, by saying that the temple had not yet been built. But this is a mere harmonistic attempt, for the Jerusalem sanctuary had been chosen and consecrated by David. The incident confirms what has been said about the legitimacy of the highplaces certainly down to the time of Solomon. Further confirmation is given by the historical books. David impaled Saul's descendants "before Yahweh" in Gideon; Samuel sacrificed at the *bama* of his native village; in the time of the Judges there were altars at Ophra, at Zorah, at Shiloh, at Bethel and at Mizpah, not to speak of the sanctuary at Dan which was served by a descendant of Moses. And the patriarchal stories of Genesis show that many of these shrines were consecrated by the fathers of the nation. Abraham built altars and worshipped at Shechem, at Bethel, at the oak of Mamre, and at Moriah. Jacob sacrificed at Beersheba, at Mizpah, at Shechem and at Bethel, where he consecrated a stone pillar, dedicating it to the divinity. The only reason why the narrator has preserved the account of these various acts is that in the mind of the people these shrines possessed special sanctity on account of their association with these venerable names.

If we now inquire when the view was first entertained that

only one place of worship was sanctioned by the divine law, we inevitably recall to mind the dramatic event in the reign of King Josiah, the detailed account of which is contained in II Kings, xxii and xxiii. Here we read that in accordance with the Book of Instruction found in the temple, all the highplaces in the towns of Judah were desecrated, and king and people took a solemn engagement to obey the commandments of the Book. What the Book was is tolerably evident from the description of what took place. Deuteronomy alone, and probably Deuteronomy in a shorter form than the one in which we now read it, answers the requirements of the text. The revolution which took place under the influence of this book, however, was too drastic to last, especially after the tragic death of the king who led in it. There was, therefore, a reaction, and it is probable that the popular reverence for the local sanctuaries would have given them permanence had not the Babylonian siege and conquest of Jerusalem intervened. This startling event was accounted for as punishment for disobedience to the Book.

It was on this ground that the author of Kings condemned the worship at the highplaces, as is abundantly clear from his narrative. And Ezekiel agrees with him. The program of the prophet provides for a single sanctuary, and for its protection from defilement. His list of sins, those for which Israel was punished, includes worship on the highplaces. Ezekiel, therefore, strengthens the position taken by Deuteronomy. That he knew nothing of a specific regulation of the sacrifices, dating back to Moses, has already been remarked. And the Priestly stratum of the Pentateuch elaborates the plan of Ezekiel, only transferring it to the Mosaic age. The priestly writer makes the work of Moses consist in the construction of a sanctuary with the same sort of regulations as those enacted by Ezekiel, only more detailed. In other words, he assumes that the priestly scheme, the hierocracy, dates from the beginning of the national life — something of which all the early literature is profoundly ignorant. The earliest legislation, contained in the Covenant Code (Ex. xx:22–xxiii:33),

specifically authorizes the multitude of shrines by its enactment: "An altar of earth shalt thou make for me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen; in every place where I bring my name to remembrance I will come to thee and bless thee. And if thou make me an altar of stones thou shalt not make it of hewn stones, for if thou lift thy tool upon it thou pollutest it." It is difficult to conceive a more distinct confirmation of the patriarchal custom. When Abraham had a theophany at the Oak of Moreh he built an altar to the Yahweh who appeared to him. When Jacob had his dream at Bethel, he not only set up a pillar for the divinity, but also erected an altar.

What the law of Exodus has in mind is the recurrence of such indications of the divine presence in particular spots, each of which will become sacred because of the act of revelation. To the Israelite God was not a God afar off, and He might indicate His presence by a remarkable dream of some unusual event — a waking vision perhaps, such as Gideon enjoyed. After receiving the commission to free his people this hero erected an altar and called it Yahweh-Shalom, and the writer adds: To this day it is in Ophra. Where a man was favored with such a vision the proper acknowledgment was a sacrifice, and this required an altar. No elaborate structure could be raised — a heap of earth or a pile of stones was sufficient, and such an altar is authorized by the Covenant Code. But a place once made sacred by a theophany remained sacred for succeeding generations. The resemblance to present-day custom in Syria strikes the observer at once, for there also a local shrine may originate in the vision of a saint or fairy.

The practice of earlier times is therefore recognized by this legislation, and there was no objection to the multiplicity of sanctuaries until the time of Deuteronomy. The prophets, indeed, objected to the whole popular worship, but not on the ground that one place alone was authorized. Masters of language as they were, they would have had no difficulty in making their position clear. Isaiah and Micah denounce the ritual of the temple in no measured terms, and imply that

Jerusalem is no better — rather worse if anything — than the other sacred places. The reason why Deuteronomy wished the temple to be the one place of worship was that the multiplicity of local highplaces confused the minds of the people as to the One National God. The emphasis with which this author declares that the Yahweh who is the God of Israel is *One Yahweh* is evidence enough of his main interest. There was also in his mind the suspicion that in many cases the local sanctuaries had been taken over from the Canaanites, and this was in fact the case. In his zeal for pure Hebraism he would have everything Canaanite exterminated. To a certain extent we must sympathize with him, not to the extent of massacring the early inhabitants, but in the interest of a purer morality. The Canaanite gods whose features, in some cases at least, Yahweh had taken on were patrons of agriculture, and therefore of animal and vegetable fruitfulness. The prosperity of the crops was thought to be due to them, as we see when Hosea represents the personified Israel saying: "I will go after my lovers who give me my bread and my wine, my wool and my flax." The kind of worship which was supposed to be grateful to these divinities is too well known to be described here, and it was the license connected with the festivals of the harvest and the vintage which caused the prophetic reaction. The Deuteronomist thought that by restricting the worship to the one chief sanctuary, not only would the uniqueness of Yahweh be emphasized, but under supervision of the royal police abuses could be held in check. The reform introduced by Deuteronomy was simply carried further by Ezekiel, and elaborated by the Priestcode.

This is one line which confirms the results of the critical analysis, and it will not do to say that the critics started out with a preconceived conception of Israel's religious development and made their analysis of the documents conform to that. No one of the many critics who occupied themselves in separating the sources had any clear idea of the significance of the highplaces, or of the bearing of the Covenant Code on the questions they were discussing, until the analysis being

completed, the religious development stood out with the distinctness which I have tried to describe.

II. SACRIFICIAL WORSHIP

To cut the throat of a lamb, catch the blood in a bowl, sprinkle it on a mound of earth or a pile of stones, then burn part or all of the flesh on that same mound does not seem to the modern man an appropriate way of approaching the divinity. His ancestors thought differently, as is shown by the prevalence of animal sacrifice all over the world. So far as the Old Testament is concerned it is clear that this is the established form of worship. The question with which we are immediately concerned is whether the order of the documents indicated by the critical analysis enables us to trace any development in the sacrificial ritual. Our answer will in this case depend somewhat on our theory of development. Does ritual begin by being complex and then become simple, or does the simple stage come first? Observation of Christian history seems to favor the second alternative. The unpretending Eucharist of the Apostles has grown into the elaborate sacrifice of the Mass. Without insisting that this case is decisive, let us follow the history of sacrifice as it reveals itself in the documents at our command.

The author to whom we attribute the earliest stratum of the Pentateuchal narrative (the Yahwist, J) assumes that sacrifice dates from the beginnings of human history. Cain brought of the fruits of the ground and Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock and of their fat, an offering to Yahweh. The word here used for offering (*minha*) means simply a gift, and all that we can gather from the passage is that the sons of Adam paid their respects to the divinity as the oriental pays his respects to a superior, that is by bringing a present. The noteworthy thing is that Abel's gift was acceptable and Cain's was not. No reason is given for the preference, but it may be allowable to conclude that the author means to assert that the animal offering is the one most proper for a religious

ceremony. Underlying this may be the feeling that the shepherd is favored by the God of Israel, rather than the cultivator of the ground. The next mention of sacrifice occurs in the story of the deluge where Noah provides an extra number of clean animals (that is animals fit for sacrifice), and offers a burnt-offering from them as soon as he leaves the ark. Here we read that the divinity inhaled the sweet savor and resolved no more to curse the soil. The fire-offering being sublimated into vapor is grateful to the god, doubtless because it is his food. Very late authors found it necessary to combat the idea that God drank the blood and ate the flesh of the sacrifice. In the early stages of belief this must have been the current conception.

While the idea of a gift underlies the offering, it is probable that another conception was soon combined with it. In tribal society every man's hand is against every other man except those of his kin or, as he would say, of his blood. But where the natural tie of blood does not exist, an artificial one may be created. In the most primitive stage this is done by mingling the blood of the parties. At a more advanced stage the same end was accomplished by sprinkling the parties with the blood of a sacrificial animal. At this stage we find our narrative, for the covenant at Sinai is solemnized by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice on the altar (representative of the divinity) and on the people. In all this there is no thought of statutory regulation of worship, though the obligation to observe the three agricultural festivals was taken as part of the covenant. How these were observed is made known by the story of Elkanah. He brought his offering to Shiloh, the tribal sanctuary, and after the portion of Yahweh had been duly burned, used the rest of the flesh in a banquet at which the members of his family received each his portion. Other worshippers did the same and that the bounds of sobriety were often passed is indicated by the suspicion of the priest that a woman who prayed inaudibly was intoxicated. The whole narrative indicates that there had been no rigorous regulation of the sacrifices such as we read in the priestly

literature. This impression is confirmed by the greater prophets. Amos denies that sacrifice had been offered in the wilderness, and Jeremiah specifically asserts that the divine commands did not concern matters of this kind. Had Isaiah known of a ritual law, he would certainly have called attention to it, instead of inquiring: Who has required this at your hands? Plainly the whole sacrificial system, if system it can be called, was based on usage and not on a revealed law.

Deuteronomy, as we have seen, was exercised in mind by the abuses that went on at the country sanctuaries. Here the holy days had degenerated into holidays, and the eating and drinking before Yahweh was simply an occasion for gross licentiousness. The same thing was true in Jerusalem to be sure, but in Jerusalem there was some hope that things could be kept more decent. To do away with the forms of worship to which the people were accustomed was impracticable. The people were still to eat and drink and rejoice before Yahweh, bringing their offerings, tithes, and firstlings. But one significant concession is made. If the people desire to eat flesh and cannot conveniently take the journey to the central sanctuary, they are given permission to slay an animal at home. The plain implication is that hitherto all slaying of animals for food had been sacrificial. When there was an altar in every village it would be no hardship to bring the animal there, give Yahweh the blood and fat, and take the flesh home. But when the one sanctuary was at Jerusalem it was too much to expect that every animal should be brought to the altar. Hence the innovation.

The third step was taken by Ezekiel, and his view of sacrifice shows an entirely new feature. We can reproduce the thought of the prophet by remembering the denunciations of the earlier seers, according to which the exile was punishment, inflicted by an angry God. But Ezekiel was a priest, and to the priestly mind the sin for which the people were punished was violation of the ritual. His accusation is that the land had been defiled. The underlying thought is that the sanctity of Yahweh and His land must be guarded from profanation. The

things which trespass on this divine attribute are in our view either violations of morality, like oppression of the poor, or of ritual, like eating things sacrificed to idols. To Ezekiel they are all ritual, for he makes no distinction between profaning the Sabbath and eating at the highplaces, on one hand, and disobedience to the commands given in Deuteronomy on the other. But the sanctity thus violated may be restored by ritual means, and once restored must be protected by the same means. What these means are is made known by the sketch of the restored commonwealth. This is in the fullest sense an ecclesiastical organization. The nation will find its reason for existence in the service of the sanctuary. Its central point is the temple, the inner room in which possesses the highest degree of the mysterious quality which separates the divine from the human. Into this room, therefore, only the most sacred person, the Highpriest, may enter, and that only on rare occasions and with elaborate precautions. The anteroom is open only to the priests, the inner court only to the Levites, and the outer court to the people, on condition that they are ritually pure.

But since the world is full of things that may interfere with the sacred quality of the building and its implements, regular purifications must be made. It is here that the sacrifices take their part in Ezekiel's scheme. In the earlier literature we have learned of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, joyous in their nature. In Ezekiel these are to be continued, but they take the second place, whereas much prominence is given to the sin-offering of which the preexilic writers say very little. The reason of the new emphasis is the importance which blood plays in the ritual. Always the portion of the divinity, it possessed the power of counteracting impurity. Hence its use to remove defilement. Sprinkled on the walls of the temple, on the implements of service, and even on the Ark of the Covenant, it would restore their lost or impaired sanctity. The sin-offerings are so called, because the blood taken from them removes sin, that is, ritual defilement, *unsins* we might say, the objects or persons to which it is applied.

The ideas of Ezekiel were taken up and elaborated by the compilers of the priestly literature. What these writers did was to gather up everything which the priestly tradition had preserved concerning this matter of clean and unclean, and combine the various data into a single code. These authors no doubt believed that the traditions dated back to the earliest period, and since Moses was the founder of Israel's religion, they thought themselves justified in attributing them to him. The Talmudists, as we saw, were similarly convinced that the Oral Law dated from Sinai. Probably it is intentional that the Priestly narrative makes no mention of sacrifice until the time of Moses. If true worship means presentation of sacrifice at the one legitimate sanctuary, it could not be offered until that sanctuary was erected, and if the sacrifice must be presented by duly consecrated persons, these persons must first be chosen and set apart. According to the account in the priestly document, Moses' chief work was to erect the tabernacle, then to consecrate Aaron and his sons, and, after this was done, to receive and promulgate the regulations concerning the sacrifices.

Such, according to the critical theory, was the order of development of Israel's ritual. The reader must judge whether it confirms what has already been said in connection with the place of worship.

III. THE PRIESTHOOD

In examining the third line of argument we will reverse the order and begin with the priestly document which we have just been discussing. The picture it presents is as follows: When Moses went up to the Mount he received specific directions to make a sanctuary, in order that the divinity might dwell among the people. A plan of the building was shown him and elaborate directions concerning the materials and dimensions were given. The appropriate furniture and the dress of the priests were also described, as well as the rite of consecration by which the priests were to be inducted into office. The command was duly communicated to the people

and the work was carried out. When the sanctuary and its servants were ready the law of sacrifice was given, as we have seen. It will be remembered that in the theory of this writer, Israel came out of Egypt a full grown nation numbering two millions of people. We are not now concerned with the mechanical difficulties of the situation except in one respect. We read that a census was taken, and the Levites were selected for the service of the sanctuary, twenty-two thousand in number. The discrepancy between the three or five priests and the twenty thousand assistants, need not be dwelt upon. What is of interest is the sharp distinction made between priests and Levites. The story of Korah points the lesson that members of the inferior order must not aspire to priestly prerogatives, for Korah and his companions being Levites, trespassed by claiming the right to act as priests. The test was made by allowing them to use the censers, whereupon fire from heaven destroyed them.[1] Moreover, the Levites are denied access to the tabernacle and are not allowed to see its furniture. When camp is broken the priests are to cover the Ark, the table, and the implements of service, and the Levites who carry the vessels take charge of them only when this has been done. Otherwise the sight of them will be fatal (Num. iv:15). In line with this is the exact regulation of the service in other particulars, enforced again by an object lesson, for Nadab and Abihu, though legitimate priests, perish because their incense is not correctly presented. The incident is made the occasion of cautioning the father and brothers of the dead men not to mourn for them, lest thus they defile themselves.

An ecclesiastical establishment of some thousands of persons must have adequate material support, and we are not surprised when this author provides for this need. He enacts that every Israelite shall give to the clergy a tenth of his gross income, as well as the first-fruits of field and orchard and firstlings of the flock. Certain parts of the sacrifices go to

[1] Numbers xvi. The account is now confused with another in which Dathan and Abiram are the leaders, but the priestly sections are easily discovered

the priests as do the freewill offerings. It is ordained further that forty-eight cities to be taken from the Canaanites are to be assigned to the sacred clan. If the plan can be carried out, the clergy will have no reason to complain of insufficient support. The historians of priestly inclination suppose that this elaborate scheme was actually promulgated by Moses, and so far as was in his power, was actually put into effect by him.

The historical difficulty comes when we discover that the whole elaborate organization appears nowhere in the rest of the literature until we come to the time of the Chronicler. Aside from a few allusions to Levites, some of which are evident interpolations in the text, the narratives of Judges, Samuel, and Kings betray no knowledge of this alleged church-state. No distinction between priests and Levites is indicated. The Highpriest is conspicuous by his absence. The cities theoretically given to the Levites are found to be in possession of other tribes, and no protest or rebuke is recorded. The crucial point, however, is not that priests are altogether unknown to the narrative, or that Levites do not occasionally appear. It is that no such sharp line of distinction is drawn as is enforced by the Priestcode. Only when we come to Ezekiel do we find intimations of such a line. He indeed is specific enough. Speaking in the name of Yahweh, he says: "House of Israel, many are your abominations in that you brought foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, into my house to profane it when you offered my bread, the fat and the blood, and you thus nullified my covenant by all your abominations." The sequel commands that henceforth no uncircumcised person shall enter the sanctuary, but the Levites who had been unfaithful to Yahweh in that they had served at the highplaces, are now to undertake the menial offices of the temple. Further, it is enjoined that the sons of Zadok shall be priests in possession of the higher offices. All this is promulgated as something entirely new. But in fact it puts the stamp of approval on an arrangement already in existence in the Jerusalem temple when the city fell. The exigency came when Deuteronomy

was made the law of the land. At that time the country sanctuaries were desecrated and their priests were thrown out of their employment. The Deuteronomists endeavored to provide for them by enacting that they should come to Jerusalem and be attached to the temple. But the descendants of Zadok were already in office there, and were not minded to take colleagues who must share the emoluments of the great sanctuary. The result was that the country priests, Levites, were admitted to the minor offices as door-keepers and sextons. This Ezekiel was willing to see continued, for after all is said, the Levites were consecrated persons, better than foreign slaves. The Deuteronomist, however, knew no distinction between classes of temple servants. He says in so many words that the whole tribe of Levi was chosen to carry the Ark, to stand before Yahweh, to bless in His name, and to serve Him. But this is just the duty and privilege of the priests.

The testimony of Deuteronomy is significant in another direction. It knows nothing of the elaborate taxes by which the priestly clan was to receive its support. It regards the whole caste as dependent on the charity of the community. The author exhorts his readers to remember the widow, the orphan, and the Levite in the distribution of the tithes. The assumption is that the tithe is at the discretion of the owner so long as he does not selfishly appropriate it to his own use. Even this he might do if he brought it to the sanctuary and there made it the material for his festival banquet. There is no question of a tax levied for the support of the clergy. All that they can claim is a share (left undefined) in the good things. And in the same connection we are told that the reason for the poverty of the clan is that they have not received any landed property — a direct contradiction to what the Priestcode ordains. The inference forces itself upon us — the regulations of the Priestcode were unknown to the Deuteronomist. And if we go back to the Covenant Code we shall find that priests are not mentioned at all.

It may be said indeed, that the mention in this document

of first fruits and festival offerings implies a priesthood of some kind. But this is far from obvious. The mention of tithes in the account of Jacob's dream might at first sight be construed in the same way. But knowledge of oriental custom shows that an attendant at the shrine is not necessary. The offering is brought before the divinity, represented by the sacred stone or a monument of some kind, and there consumed in a feast at which the sacrifice is eaten by the offerer, his family, and his guests, the god receiving his share. It is implied in Jacob's experience that there was no priest at Bethel; for the sacredness of the spot was not known until he discovered it by his vision. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob erected altars and offered sacrifice without the intervention of a priest. At the covenant offering at Sinai the sacrificers are the young men of the tribes, although both Moses and Aaron are present. One passage indeed in the patriarchal narratives seems to imply the presence of a priest. This is the one where Rebecca 'inquired of God.' The phrase is the one used elsewhere of inquiring by means of the oracle, and the oracle was manipulated by an expert, that is a priest. This is abundantly confirmed by the Biblical texts; for the business of the priest is to impart Tora, that is instruction as to what is pleasing to the divinity or the reverse, and this he does by means of the oracle.

Our conclusion is that in the earliest period the institution of the priesthood was spontaneous and loosely organized; that in the Deuteronomic period an attempt was made to bring it into connection with the sole legitimate sanctuary, the one at Jerusalem; that Ezekiel sanctioned the closer organization, enjoining the division of the guild into two classes; that the Priestcode carried the organization still further and endeavored to make the clergy economically independent. In other words the order of the documents ascertained by the critical process gives us an intelligible account of the growth of this institution. This third line of inquiry, therefore, confirms the conclusions already reached as to the reliability of the analysis.

IV. ORIGINALITY OF THE PROPHETS

Hitherto we have considered only incidentally the group of books which bear the names of Prophets. That these books present problems similar to those we have been discussing is evident at a glance. The Book of the Twelve, Minor Prophets we call them, is made up of a number of compositions of widely different dates. Isaiah is the name given to a similar complex of discourses and poems. For our present purpose we need note only that by common consent Amos is the oldest of the group, Hosea coming next, followed by Isaiah and Micah. Jeremiah's synchronism with the Babylonian troubles is sufficiently attested by his book, and that Ezekiel lived in the exile he himself tells us. The Jewish theory, which has not altogether died out, is that these preachers were expounders of the Mosaic Law, that is, of the Pentateuch. This view is a part of the tradition which holds that a complete and final code, moral and ritual, was delivered to Moses and written down by him, promulgated also with the most solemn sanctions. This code is of perpetual obligation and all that the faithful Jew has to do to obtain the favor of God is to study it and make clear to himself what it enjoins, then to obey its injunctions. The only literary activity for which such an elaborate code leaves room is the activity of the scribe, the man who studies the statute and teaches others what it requires. Such activity we have already found in our discussion of legalistic interpretation. That it differs from what we find in the books of the prophets is clear. No more striking contrast can be imagined than the contrast between these books and the collection which we know as the Talmud.

We have found that the point of view of the Priestcode and that of the author of Chronicles are similar. The Chronicler can give us some idea of what the prophets would have said had they had the authentic code of the Pentateuch in their hands. His judgment on the northern tribes is that their sin consisted in forsaking the one legitimate sanctuary at Jerusalem. To enforce the lesson he introduces the prophet

Abijah rebuking Jeroboam for this sin. The charge is that this king has driven out the priests, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, whereas in Jerusalem the legitimate priests conduct the service according to the Law (II Chron. xiii:9–11). On the other hand Jehoshaphat of Judah is commended because he sent priests and Levites throughout the cities of Judah with the Book of the Law in their hands to teach the people (xvii:7–9). This is of course what should have been done in case there were a divinely sanctioned code in existence; and the neglect of such action should have been the subject of the rebuke of the prophets. But the outstanding fact about the prophets is that they utter no such rebuke. They never appeal to the Mosaic standard, and the name of Moses occurs only once in the book of a preexilic prophet. The English reader does not quite realize the state of the case, because where he finds the word *law* in his Bible he instinctively thinks of the Pentateuch. But the Hebrew word *tora* which is rendered in this way would better be translated *instruction* or *decision.* In what is probably the earliest account of Moses which we have we find him giving decisions on questions submitted to him. This was before he had received any code properly so called, although the narrative assumes that questions will arise on which the people need instruction. All our documents assume that one of the duties of the priest is the giving of *tora,* that is instruction, on matters of ritual. The nature of such questions is made clear by Haggai, who is commanded to put to the priest this inquiry: "If one carry sacred (that is, sacrificial) flesh in the skirt of his garment, and then with his skirt touch bread or broth or wine or oil or any food, will it (the food) become sacred?" The point of inquiry is the contagion of the sacred things; is it so strong that it will render taboo what comes into contact with that which is itself sacred by contact with sacrificial flesh? There is here no reference to a code; the priest is supposed to know the boundaries which separate clean and unclean. Ezekiel's description of the priest's function is just this: They shall teach my people the difference between the sacred and the common, and cause

them to discriminate the clean from the unclean; and in a controversy they shall judge; according to my decisions shall they judge (Ezek. xliv:23f.). Neither here nor in the earlier prophets is there any intimation that the priest had a book according to which he must give his sentence. What a change was wrought when the Priestcode had actually been published is indicated by such a composition as the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, in which the author delights to set forth his appreciation of the Word, the Commandments, the Statutes, the Judgments, the Testimonies and the Precepts of God. Such meditation on a book is nowhere commended by earlier writers, and when Ezekiel threatens that *tora* shall perish from the priest and counsel from the ancient, how easy it would be for him to say that the Book of God would be destroyed, or withheld or ignored, if he had such a book in mind. But nothing of the kind is found in the record.

Moreover, when the earlier prophets allude to the *tora* it is evident that they do not refer to the Mosaic code. That code as we have abundantly shown, was ritual in its main purpose. But when Isaiah invites or rather summons the people to hear the *tora* of their God it is to denounce the ritual in unsparing terms: "To what purpose is the number of your sacrifices to me? . . . Who has required this at your hands, to trample my courts?" The prophet is speaking in the name of his God, but he does not derive his *tora* from any written source. Amos thinks that the more sacrifices are offered, the greater the sin, and if any one maintains that this is because they were offered at Bethel and Gilgal instead of at Jerusalem, all we can say is that the prophet was strangely derelict in not telling the people so in so many words. What the prophets required was something quite different from the punctilious observance of a ritual code. As Amos puts it: "Let justice roll on as waters and righteousness as a perennial stream." Hosea has the root of the matter: "I desire loyalty rather than sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings."

That the prophets were great moral teachers is trite enough.

What I am trying to show is that only on the modern view of the Book, according to which they were not dependent on any alleged ritual Law, do we appreciate their originality. Of course there may have been in existence some collection of legal precedents such as the Covenant Code of Exodus. If so it was not regarded by these preachers of righteousness as the authoritative voice of God. The conception of a complete system of ethics, ritual, economics, and science of government, such as the Pentateuch claims to be, was entirely foreign to their thought. Think what force they might have given their exhortations if they could have quoted as inspired revelation the verse which Jesus regarded as the summing up of Law and Prophets, the verse found in the Priestcode: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thine own soul! Their silence concerning any such divine command is certainly more convincing than words.

V. SIN AND ATONEMENT

If the reader will turn to the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus he will find a series of threats, designed to enforce obedience to the commands embodied in the preceding chapters. The concluding verse reads: These are the statutes and judgments and instructions which Yahweh gave between Himself and the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai. A similar verse is found at the end of the next chapter and another closes the book of Numbers. In each case it looks as if the verse was the subscription to what was once a separate document. Again at the conclusion of what we call the Covenant Code we find a series of promises conditioned on observance of the provisions of the Code, and in Deuteronomy we have an elaborate series of threats and promises, apparently the conclusion of the book in its original form. The only way of accounting for these similar sections is to suppose that in each case they belong to collections of laws or precedents, once separate but now combined in the Pentateuch.

We have already found confirmation of this hypothesis in

the difference in tone noticeable when we pass from one to the other. In the matter of sin (a fundamental religious conception, of course) we see that the Covenant Code deals with it as a matter of trespass on a neighbor's rights. The Code describes the crime and specifies the penalty. In Deuteronomy we have a hortatory work which, however, deals with matters of civil law, adding ecclesiastical regulations. In the code which ends with Leviticus xxvi, we have a distinctly ritual book, one which forms part of the priestly stratum, but which at one time circulated independently. This (Lev. xvii-xxvi) we know as the Holiness Code, because of its leading motive which is expressed in the words: Be holy unto me, for I am holy and have separated you from the nations, that you may be mine. The translation is indeed misleading, for we understand by the word holiness moral perfection. The Hebrew had a different idea. He was in agreement with other people, of a certain stage of thought, by whom everything in the world of men and things was put into one of two classes known as *sacred* and *common*. On one side of the sharp line of division was the divinity and what belonged to Him; on the other was the world and things not set apart for religious uses. Sacred and profane are the words we use to designate the two classes, though we do not think of the gods as sacred. Yet the idea is in the Hebrew word, and the nearest we can come to the meaning of the verse just quoted is to translate: Be separate from all that is common, because I, Yahweh, am thus separate. Another writer has expressed the thought in the words: Now therefore if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant you shall be my own possession . . . and shall be a kingdom of priests, a sacred (consecrated) nation. This certainly is the idea which Ezekiel had. Israel's function in the world is to be guardian of the temple and its service; and to this end the nation must be kept pure from defilement, 'in a state of grace' to use later theological language, though the state of grace was conceived of physically rather than morally.

For the logical effect of this conception is to reveal a num-

ber of dangers against which a man must guard. The intrusion of that which is common into the sphere of the sacred will be destructive to the intruder. If an unconsecrated person should come into the sanctuary he would fall a victim to the divine anger. On the other hand if the priest wearing the sacred vestments should go about among the people he would infect persons and things with his own character, and thus make them unfit for common life and common use. The contrast between the two classes is expressed also by the words clean and unclean. Unclean in the highest degree is all that is connected with the worship of other divinities than Yahweh, including in this class the spirits of the dead and all local spirits, fairies, or cobolds. It is not without reason therefore that the Holiness Code requires every animal slain for food to be brought to the sanctuary, that the people should cease sacrificing to the satyrs with which their imagination peopled the open country. This is a reversal of the Deuteronomic permission to slay at a distance from the sanctuary. It looks as though the people could not rid themselves of the idea that every act of slaughter must concern some divinity, and that when they poured the blood on the ground, as was enjoined by Deuteronomy, they were actually sacrificing to the *genius loci.*

The scrupulosity of this Code is explicable then on its theory that the sanctity of the people is necessary if Yahweh is to dwell among them. The presence of anything unclean is abhorrent to Him, causes His anger to flame out, and destroys the offender. If the nation is infected He will desert His dwelling, and the people will be left without their Protector. It must be clear that this idea was the result of the experiences of the exile. Ezekiel drove it home when in vision he saw Yahweh leaving the temple because of the abominations of the people of Jerusalem. In other words the point of view of the Holiness Code is that of Ezekiel, and the redaction must have taken place at about the date of the prophet's activity. His view of sin we have found to be ritual. Offences against the moral law and violations of rit-

ual purity alike offended the divinity. This also is the view of the Holiness Code. But in one respect it is more specific. It is careful to distinguish unwitting from intentional transgressions, and to provide separate treatment for the two classes. For sin committed "with a high hand," that is with full knowledge, this author has only penalty: *That soul shall be cut off from its people.* Whether he meant that execution was to be done by the authorities, or whether the offender was to be left to an act of God is not made clear, and this is another evidence of the late date of this Code, for in the exile, and for the most part afterwards, the civil law was not in the hands of the Jews. Probably the excommunication of the offender was in the writer's mind, for his primary interest, as we have seen, is in keeping the sacred area free from pollution. The purity of the camp (here put for the city of Jerusalem which he had really in mind) must be preserved by the exclusion of the leper, every one that had an issue, and every one unclean by contact with the dead (Num. v:1–4), lest they *defile* the camp. Certain diseases, here classed as leprosy, certain physiological conditions, and contact with dead bodies are named together, because they are all attributed to the same cause, that is, influence of demons. Most surprising to us is the precaution taken in case of childbirth. There underlies it no thought of the sinfulness of sexual desire, and no desire to minimize the importance of continuance of the race. The Hebrew did not exalt asceticism, and the gift of children is regarded by the Biblical writers as one of the best evidences of the divine favor. Why, then, should a woman who has borne a son be shut out of the camp forty days, or, if it were a daughter that was given her, eighty days? And why should she require a special purification at the end of the period? The answer is that traditionally the sexual life was regarded as something under the care of special divinities. Therefore, everything connected with it is *taboo* in the religion of Yahweh, and precautions must be taken accordingly.

It is interesting to note that the purification in these cases is effected by an offering called a sin-offering, although in our

apprehension no sin has been committed. The priest who officiates is said to *make atonement* for the offender. The word translated 'make atonement,' has a history however, and we must not read into it more than the early writer understood by it. The mother of a new-born babe has committed no sin, and needs no atonement in our sense of the word. What has been said about the prominence of the sin-offering in the postexilic literature makes clear what is meant. The offering takes away the *taboo* under which the mother, because of supposed uncanny influences, suffers, and when this is removed she can again enter the sanctuary.

This idea of purification is somewhat more elaborately set forth in the regulations concerning the leper. When it is certified that he is healed of his disease he must still submit to certain rites before he is admitted to the community. In this case the priest takes two birds, also cedar wood, scarlet stuff and hyssop — substances which were supposed to counteract ritual uncleanness. One of the birds is slain and its blood is sprinkled on the convalescent, after the red substances have been dipped in the blood, apparently to heighten the prophylactic power. The living bird is then dipped in the blood and allowed to go free. This is a preliminary rite and the patient is kept apart seven days longer. Then by a ceremony of consecration, quite similar to that by which the priests are inducted into office, he is qualified to enter the sanctuary. The bird let loose is supposed to carry away any lurking infection, thus reducing the uncleaness by one degree, but what remains is sufficient to keep the man away from the sanctuary seven days longer. After this period has elapsed, the ceremony of consecration is necessary before he is *rectus in ecclesia.* It may not be out of place to point out here that in all this there is no idea of a substitutionary atonement; the sin-offering is not slain in place of the guilty man. The idea that it is so slain has been prominent in Christian exposition, and is found also in Judaism. Manasseh ben Israel says that, as Isaac was to be sacrificed and the Lord was satisfied with a ram, so he who brings a sacrifice should consider that for

his offences he merited the death which the animal suffers. Christian commentators have gone so far as to interpret the altar fire by which the victim is consumed as a type of the fire of hell which awaits the evil-doer. The misapprehension could hardly be more extreme. The altar and all that is on it is most sacred, while the fire of hell is most accursed. Moreover, Isaac was not under sentence on account of his sin, but was brought as a burnt-offering because he was the most precious gift which his father could bring. The lesson of the story is of course that Yahweh is willing to accept the gift of an animal instead of the first-born son on which he had a traditional claim. But nothing is said of sin or a sin-offering in the narrative. Even in the case of the leper, the offering is not a substitute for the man. The man in fact is not guilty in any sense in which we use that word. If, as has sometimes been supposed, his disease was sent as a punishment for sin, the guilt no longer rests upon him for by hypothesis he has been cured before the offering is brought. Whether substitutionary atonement is anywhere exemplified in the Old Testament is another question. All that we are here concerned to notice is that it does not come into view in connection with the sin-offerings.

That this whole matter of clean and unclean, sacred and common, consecrated and taboo, is one of the primitive religious conceptions which are found at all stages of human development, needs no demonstration. It does not follow that, because to our view it is primitive, therefore the document in which it is most emphasized is of very ancient date. The tenacity of this idea enabled it to hold the place it holds in the post-exilic literature of the Jews. Its prominence there is due to the experience of the exile. The long delay of God in bringing back the glories of Solomon's kingdom impressed the Jews with the sense of guilt. This sense is made evident by such prayers as that of Nehemiah, and by the touching expostulations of some of the Psalms. The scrupulosity of the Priestcode in providing for the purification of people,

land, temple, and altar, is evidence of the postexilic frame of mind. Its resemblance to what we find in Ezekiel has already been remarked upon. The Priestly view of sin and its remedy, therefore, confirms the critical view of Israel's literature.

XIV

SOME SURVIVALS

IN THE first of these essays it was shown that Hebrew literature is the result of a complicated process in which early material went through the hands of various editors before it assumed the shape in which it has come to us. It may be interesting to note some erratic blocks which attest the reality of this process. We will not dwell upon the Babylonian material, such as the story of the great deluge, because that is common property of the expositors. Some minor insertions in the narrative are equally significant. In the book of Exodus, for example, we have an anecdote which on examination shows itself to be of different tone from the narrative in which it is imbedded. It tells that when Moses and his family were journeying through the desert their God, Yahweh, met them and was about to kill the prophet. Zipporah, his wife, with great presence of mind, took a sharp stone and circumcised her infant son, then smeared the blood on her husband's body, whereupon the angry divinity spared him (Ex. iv:24–26). The more we look at the story the more we are puzzled by it. Moses was the chosen instrument of Yahweh for the deliverance of Israel from bondage; he was returning to Egypt to obey the divine command; no oversight is charged against him or against his wife; neglect to circumcise his child, which is traditionally made the occasion of the anger, is nowhere mentioned in the narrative. To crown all, there is no parallel for the use of circumcision blood in the way indicated in the text.

On the other hand, parallels can be pointed out in primitive religions, so-called. It is a common belief that the *genius loci* must be placated whenever a new location for tent or house is chosen. For this reason the custom of making a foundation

sacrifice for every new building is wide-spread. The anecdote we are considering is apparently a local saga which has been transferred to Moses and Yahweh. Blood being a powerful charm it is used to ward off hostile spirits, and while human blood is not employed for this purpose in Hebrew ritual, there is no reason why it should not be so applied. Circumcision brings the boy into the fellowship of the clan, and so with the God of the clan. In fact circumcision is the seal of the covenant by which Yahweh and Israel are bound together. The application of the blood would thus remind the God of His relations with His people, and so the charm would be doubly effective. We might remind ourselves here that in the account of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the boy is bound and laid on the wood of the altar, evidently in order that the blood may flow directly onto the altar, another instance contrary to the usual custom showing that the human blood is effective with the divinity.

A similar survival is preserved in the book of Joshua. There we read that at the invasion of Canaan, Joshua had a vision. He saw a man with a drawn sword, and on asking his errand was informed that the visitant had come as prince of the army of Yahweh. Moreover, Joshua was commanded to put off his shoes because he was on sacred ground. Joshua did so — and then the narrative breaks off. Evidently we have a mutilated fragment of a local saga, according to which the divinity agreed to help the Israelites in their war — on certain conditions. That it was a divinity and not merely an angel who spoke is clear, for the ground was sacred — always evidence of the presence of a god. What the conditions stated were we can no longer discover, but we may conjecture that the local Baal (to use the name current among the natives) agreed to the Israelite conquest on the understanding that he was to receive tithes, first-fruits, and offerings as before.

The two stories thus considered belong to the earlier strata of the Pentateuch, but that the priestly document also preserves material of primitive cast is evident. The critical theory in dating the code in the exile does not mean to assert

that all its content originated at that time. In fact, being a codification of priestly tradition, it must contain elements of different dates. In other communities the common law preserves statutes and decisions of very widely separated periods. That case law preceded statute law in Israel seems evident from the wording of some of the regulations. In the Covenant Code, for example, we read: If a man do thus and so such a penalty will follow. The implication is that a judgment to this effect had been pronounced in some historic instance. The use of the word *judgments* in connection with the words *statutes* and *commandments* is proof of the historic process. In the priestly document we find some regulations promulgated in connection with particular instances. Thus the man who blasphemed the Name was arrested and held until the oracle could pronounce judgment (Lev. xxiv:10–16). Similarly, the sentence on the man who gathered sticks on the sabbath created a precedent (Num. xv:32–36).

The codes now combined in the Pentateuch must therefore be regarded as the result of successive codifications of precedents handed on from one generation to another by tradition. Deuteronomy might be thought to be an exception, since it is the program of the prophetic party. But even it embodies much customary law. Ezekiel's legislation again, though put into shape by the prophet, derives its substance from priestly usage. Its temple is a reproduction of that of Solomon, only fortified with stronger walls and increased in area, and its regulations concerning the priesthood were apparently the carrying out of the practice of the stricter party before the exile. In the priestly stratum also, we discover certain elements which we can account for only as survivals. They were part of folk-custom so tenaciously held that they could not be safely disregarded. One of them has strayed into Deuteronomy, although apparently not a part of the book as originally published. This is the section which provides for a case of murder, the author of the crime being unknown (Deut. xxi:1–9). In case a man is found slain in the open country with no clue to the murderer, the sheikhs of the nearest

village are to bring a heifer which has not known the yoke, taking it to a valley in which there is a stream of running water, but which is not under cultivation. There in the presence of the priests they are to disavow any connection with the crime, washing their hands as a token. The victim then has its neck broken, and apparently the carcass is left on the spot. The whole ceremony is so foreign to Hebrew notions, as recorded in the Law, that we must suppose it a relic of early religion. The most plausible supposition is that it is a sacrifice to the spirit of the murdered man. The ghost of a man who has met a violent death is believed to wreak his vengeance on the living, and it must be placated in some way. Worship of the dead is an element common to all early religion. The point we now have in mind is that a sacrifice of this kind is foreign to the official Hebrew religion. Everything connected with the dead is unclean to the worshippers of Yahweh. This particular rite therefore is discordant to the document in which we find it. It is a true survival.

The same may be said of a curious ceremony now enjoined in the book of Numbers (v:11–31). It provides that if a man suspects his wife of unfaithfulness he may bring her before the priest, and also provide a meal-offering. The priest is then to take 'holy water' — the only mention of such a substance in Hebrew literature — and put into it some dust from the floor of the sanctuary. He then writes certain curses and washes off the ink into the cup of water and this is given the woman to drink. At the opening of the ceremony the woman has been adjured as to her innocence, and the solemn assurance is given her that if she is guilty the magical water will cause her body to swell, and her thigh to fall away, that is, will cause an abortion.

Obviously, we have here a case of ordeal. The divinity is appealed to to discover guilt by a magical test. The sacred water and the dust from the floor of the sanctuary have uncanny power, being *taboo* to the layman. This power is magnified by the curses written on the paper and washed off into the water. The solemn adjuration by the priest impresses

this fact on the suspected woman. Whether the ceremony will affect her imagination so as to produce the effect threatened, we need not inquire. The belief of the people that the detection of guilt may be accomplished in this way is of course evident on the surface. But no other case of application of the ordeal is found in the Law, and we must suppose this to be a true instance of survival.

A third instance is the case of the red heifer (Num. 19), the only one in which the color of the victim is specified. This animal is to be brought outside the camp, a requirement without parallel in other parts of the Law, for all offerings must be brought to the door of the sanctuary. The ceremony is, to be sure, directed *towards* the tabernacle, and a priest is to be present. When the animal is slain this priest takes of the blood and sprinkles it seven times in the direction of the sacred Dwelling. This again is a departure from priestly custom, for in every other case the blood is applied directly to the altar and, in the sin-offerings, applied also to the person or things to be purified. Although this is called a sin-offering, it is peculiar in that a female victim is chosen, whereas in all other cases it must be a male animal. When the sprinkling of blood has been accomplished the rest of the blood and the whole carcass, including the skin and the contents of the intestines, are to be burned, and into the fire the priest is to throw cedar wood, scarlet stuff, and hyssop. After the burning, the ashes are to be collected and kept in a clean place. They are to be used for ritual cleansing, that is when a person is levitically defiled by the presence of a human corpse, or by contact with human remains or with a grave, he must be purified by being sprinkled with water in which some of the ashes have been mingled. This is to be done on the third and also on the seventh day after the defilement has been contracted. Further, the tent in which a death has taken place is to be cleansed in like manner. The statute closes with a severe threat against any neglect of the rite; the guilty man is to be cut off from the assembly. Curiously enough, the persons who are concerned in the rite, the priest, the man

who does the burning, the one who collects the ashes, and the one who does the sprinkling, are made 'unclean' by participation in the ceremony.

In spite of the importance which the recorder of the law attaches to it, there is in the whole Old Testament only one instance in which the observance of this law is narrated, and that one seems to be a story designed simply to show how the rite is to be made effective. This instance is the slaughter of the Midianites (Num. xxxi). Here we read that the warriors who had been active in the massacre were kept outside the camp for seven days, and purified themselves the third day and the seventh day. The plunder also, consisting of metal, was purified first by fire and then by the 'water of impurity.' Nowhere else in the numerous wars of Israel did the soldiers, so far as our knowledge goes, take pains to conform to the law.

The perplexity into which we are brought by careful consideration of this chapter is not relieved by the efforts of the expositors, whether Jewish or Christian. The Rabbis confess that they can give no reason for the law, and suppose that Solomon had this legislation in mind when he wrote: I said I will be wise, but it was far from me. Some say that the explanation was vouchsafed to Moses alone, and others affirm that the Almighty Himself found it a worthy subject for study and that Moses found Him engaged upon it when he ascended the Mount. Attempts to connect the heifer of the text with other cows mentioned in the Old Testament, or even with the golden calf are merely evidences of the straits to which the commentators are reduced. Christian interpretation is no more helpful. The attempt of Barnabas to find Christ typified in the section, was noticed in the first of these essays. It is obviously discredited by the violence it does to the text, and later Christian efforts are no more convincing. Our only recourse is to suppose that we have here a piece of early religious ritual, discordant to the general tone of Judaism, but which was preserved because of the firmness with which the people held to it.

What this early religious rite was, seems clear from the parallels that we are able to point out. The distinctive marks of this ceremony, and the ones which have given us perplexity, are precisely those which in other religions characterize sacrifices to the dead. First of all the red color of the victim is the color associated with death or with the disposal of a corpse. Red coffins, red banners at funerals, red objects deposited with the dead man, red pigment applied to the corpse are attested in different regions. The choice of this color is explicable, since being the color of the blood it is associated with life. Among the Greeks it was believed that the blood of a victim gave some semblance of life to the shade in Hades. The red victim would be doubly effective because of its color. These same Greeks offered red victims to the underworld deities, and the spirits of the dead are associated or confused with these deities in the minds of many worshippers. The Archon of Plataea, who at other times wore white garments, wore crimson when invoking the spirits of dead warriors. A further parallel is the sacrifice of a female victim, and when we read that a *barren* cow was offered by Ulysses to a dead friend, we are irresistibly reminded of the red heifer which according to Talmudic tradition must be a virgin. The most remarkable thing about the heifer is that her blood was shed away from the sanctuary. Jewish tradition forbids the priest who sprinkles the blood to use a vessel; he must catch it in his hand and then wipe off his hand on the carcass. We must conclude that originally the blood was allowed to flow to the ground, and that the sprinkling of a little of it towards the sanctuary is a superficial attempt to conceal the original method. But in sacrifice for the dead the blood was absorbed by the ground. Again, the burning in this case is more thorough than in other sacrifices, just as in Greek religion victims for the dead are wholly consumed, either on very low altars or on the ground. We may even suspect that the place specified in this rite is not without significance. It is 'before the sanctuary.' But as the sanctuary which the Priestcode has in mind is the Jerusalem temple this means on the Mount

of Olives, and this Mount was a place of sepulture for Jerusalem from early times.

The number of parallels thus discoverable can hardly be accidental, in which case we have before us a veritable survival from the animistic stage of religion, a sacrifice for the departed souls, something against which the religion of Yahweh reacted strongly, but which was apparently too firmly entrenched in the popular belief to be wholly discarded. The defilement of those who took part in the rite now becomes intelligible. Every one concerned in a sacrifice of this kind necessarily became unfit for the sanctuary of Yahweh — just as the Greek who took part in the worship of a hero could not enter the temple of Zeus until purified. Consecration to one divinity was antipathetic to another. Doubtless popular belief among the Hebrews held that the ghost of a dead man was likely to work harm to the living unless placated. The kings of Judah were honored after their death by what is called a burning, apparently a sacrifice of some kind, and that Yahweh regarded the presence of their tombs in the vicinity of His sanctuary as an insult shows that some sort of divine honors were paid to them. It was safer, the compilers of the Priestcode thought, to retain this rite on account of this popular prejudice. All that remains to explain is the fact that the ashes were used in lustration, and had a purifying effect, although they defiled those who handled them. The only hypothesis which fits the case is that originally the sprinkling at the end of seven days marked the termination of the period for which the mourners consecrated themselves to the departed. It was still necessary for those who had been sprinkled to take the ritual bath before being admitted to the sanctuary.

The cases of survival which we have now considered are taken from different strata of the Pentateuch. They serve to strengthen the critical contention that the five books ascribed to Moses are the result of a complicated process in which elements of different date and different origin have been brought into juxtaposition.

XV

APOCALYPTIC VAGARIES

THE STRENGTH of certain expectations ostensibly based on exegesis of the Bible is attested by the number of religious communities which are correctly classed as Adventists. Besides those which use that name as their official title, we may count here the Plymouth Brethren, the Shakers, the Mormons, the Christadelphians, and the Bible Students Association organized under the lead of the late Pastor Russell. The recent world-war also brought to public notice various expounders of prophecy who endeavored to interpret the war in the light of Adventist expectations. To say that so large a number of Christian people are mistaken may seem presumptuous, but the historical study which their doctrine suggests, can hardly lead to any other conclusion. Without prejudgment, let us endeavor to make such a study.

The presuppositions on which all these bodies are based are two: first, that the main office of the Old Testament prophets was prediction of the future; and secondly, that one book in the Old Testament and one in the New contain and, to him who is able to interpret them, set forth a complete scheme of the world's history, an outline, that is, of what may be expected to come to pass until the consummation of all things and the creation of a new state of society. For the first-named of these beliefs, the word prophet is perhaps to blame, for on the surface it seems to mean a foreteller. The Hebrew word, however, seems not to have had this connotation, but to have designated one who speaks for another, specifically one who brings the message of God, whether

the message concerns the past, the present, or the future. To the unbiased reader it must be clear that whatever predictions the earlier prophets uttered were conditional. Like all other preachers, they warned men of the consequences of their evil deeds, and promised happiness in case they would repent. Until the exile the message was generally pessimistic, as Jeremiah intimates when he says to Hananiah: The prophets that were before me and thee prophesied against many countries and against great kingdoms, of war and of evil and of pestilence. The prophet who prophesies of peace — when the word of prophet comes to pass then shall the prophet be known, that Yahweh has in fact sent him (Jer. xxviii:8f.). That is to say, all the presumption is against the prophet who predicts anything but calamity.

To trace the history of Messianic prophecy is beyond the scope of this essay. Our immediate business is with the apocalyptic form which this hope took in such times of deep depression as those in which the true believers often found themselves. At such times the desire to read the future becomes acute as we have reason to know from our observations during the late war. We must remember that the ancient world was full of portents and prognostications. Every unusual event in sky or earth was supposed to presage some other event about to come to pass. Since the conception of natural law had not arisen, everything was attributed to the direct action of the gods. Hope, therefore, taught men to expect supernatural intervention whenever human help seemed inadequate. Evidence is given by the book of Ezekiel which, in this as in some other respects, marks an epoch. This prophet, pessimistic as he was during the early years of his exile, became more hopeful when the predicted calamity of Jerusalem actually took place. Whatever Messianic expectation existed before his time was adopted by him and made more specific. His detailed program forms the basis for those who followed. That program includes the defeat of the hostile world-powers, represented by Gog; the return of Israel to its own land; the erection of a new temple in which

God will reside; and an era of undisturbed peace and prosperity, at least for the people of God.

In the Maccabean period, when Antiochus attempted to crush out the religion of faithful Jews, it was natural that the hope of deliverance should again find expression. This it did in the book of Daniel, the first of the apocalypses. This book differs from Ezekiel in that it attempts to set a date for the divine intervention. The author's view takes in the history of the world so far as it affects the fortunes of Israel. Four great world-empires are to pass in succession over the stage, beginning with that of Babylon in which the author makes his hero, Daniel, take his stand. The last of these is to be miraculously destroyed by the kingdom of God, which will then fill the earth. This event the author expects to take place in three years and a half from the time of his writing. To fix this date he makes an elaborate calculation based on a saying of Jeremiah. That prophet had named seventy years as the time of exile, not to encourage hope of an early return, but to insist that the exiles shall reconcile themselves to the situation in which they find themselves and not expect an early deliverance. But the apocalyptical writer who takes the name of Daniel knowing that the seventy years had brought very little, if any, relief to the Jews of the dispersion concluded that the seventy years were not meant to be taken literally, but stood for seventy year-weeks. His calculation is given in detail, and culminates in the assertion that all but half of the last week has passed and therefore that endurance through the remaining half is what is required, after which the new state of things will come about. The martyrs for their faith will then be raised from the dead to share the blessedness of the kingdom, and the persecutors will also be raised to receive the penalty of their misdeeds.

This apocalypse we now know to be only one of a number of such works which have many features in common. Products of times of affliction, they seek to keep alive the hope of believers by promising early deliverance. The faith of the authors in the rule of God makes them confident that He

cannot delay His mercy, and that He will act in the immediate future. The relief is pictured either as the setting up of the Messianic kingdom, the throne to be occupied by a Son of David, or as the rule of God in person, or again as the hierocracy in which the people of Israel will act as priest for the whole world. Its seat will be Jerusalem, but a Jerusalem transformed into something quite different from the city we know. In the more transcendental forms of the expectation we find this New Jerusalem already prepared in heaven, only waiting for the right moment to descend and take its place on earth. Its coming will be preceded by convulsions of nature, and the oppressive nations will be called before the bar of God to be judged for their sins. And all this is to take place in the near future, reckoned from the time when each author puts his expectations into written form.

What concerns us now is to note that the Jewish expectation of the Messianic time passed over into the Church. The belief that the Messiah had already come in the person of Jesus could not make men think that all the glories of the Messianic kingdom were present — the little flock which professed allegiance to Jesus was poor and afflicted, often persecuted for its faith. In such circumstances the hope took the form of expectation of a second advent. The New Testament Apocalypse simply adapts the Jewish program to this form of the expectation. The author sees convulsions in nature and in the world of man. Then comes the sudden revelation of the Lord from heaven, the drastic overthrow of the hostile powers, the rebuilding of Jerusalem or the descent of the heavenly city which is to take its place, the presence of the Messiah as universal ruler, and peace and happiness throughout the ages. All this the author assures us is *shortly* to come to pass. This, as we have seen, is a feature common to these compositions, and as if to leave us in no doubt the transfigured Jesus of the Apocalypse assures us: Behold I come quickly. That in fact the Christians of the first generation expected to see the return of Jesus in their own time is evident from the tone of other New Testament

writings. Jewish parallels are easily found. The defenders of Jerusalem against the assaults of Titus were animated by a belief that God would suddenly reveal Himself and deliver His city. After the fall of Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, the author of Fourth Ezra comforts himself with the thought that the great overturning must still come, and at no long interval. The Sibylline books expect the Messiah soon after the Roman triumph, and that the standard of revolt was raised in the second century of our era because the Jews believed the Messiah to have come in the person of Bar Kochba is well known.

In every age the inappeasable desire to know the future has produced attempts to date the consummation of all things. Two possibilities at once suggest themselves; the date of the Advent may be known by direct revelation, or it may be discovered by examination of Scripture, in which it is, by hypothesis, contained, though not obvious to the careless or unbelieving reader. Both these ways are in evidence in the history of the Church. In every age there have been enthusiasts who thought themselves inspired to reveal the future. With them we are not now concerned, for we are studying the history of interpretation. We say with Jeremiah: He that hath a dream let him tell his dream; what has the straw to do with the wheat? As to those who deduce their theories from Scripture we are at once struck with their divergence from each other. A monograph on this subject which does not profess to be exhaustive enumerates no less than twenty-seven different dates which were fixed as the time of the end between the years 557 and 1734 of our era, and the calculations have gone on down to our own day. The question naturally arises: How can so many divergent results be drawn from the same Scriptures?

Examination of the postulates underlying the calculations shows that they are only two in number. One is that the divine plan of the ages, that is, the whole scheme of human history, can be deduced from the numerical data of the Bible. The second asserts that the date of the Coming is stated in

certain passages in Daniel and Revelation, but in enigmatical language, the purpose being to conceal the real meaning from the superficial reader. The two theories are not mutually exclusive. In fact they are usually held in conjunction. The former gives prominence to the numbers seven and twelve in the sacred writings, and suggests that the history of the world is arranged on the scale of one of these numbers. One of the widely accepted beliefs has been that as God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, so the course of the world would run in six thousand years at the end of which the great world-sabbath of a thousand years would come. Less prominent but still discoverable is the theory that eleven periods of five hundred years each will elapse before the final consummation, the twelfth being the time of bliss. Another number which plays a part in ancient symbolism is four, and this may have been in the mind of some, since the Old Testament chronology (that of the priestly writer) makes about four thousand years to have elapsed between the creation and the Roman period. A Rabbinic tradition based on this number affirms that the Messiah is to live four hundred years. Daniel's four periods dominated by four great empires have already been mentioned, and may have been suggested by the Hesiodic four ages. The prominence of the number seven in the book of Daniel has also been remarked upon, and reappears in the Revelation of John, where the forty-two months are equivalent to the three and a half years of the older book, half of a seven-year period, this again being the twelve hundred and sixty days which have so large a part in later expectation.

To go back a little, we may notice that the book of Enoch, pre-Christian apparently, calculates seventy generations from the date of the assumed author. During this period the fallen angels are to be imprisoned under the earth, and at its termination are to be brought to the final judgment.[1] Later Jewish calculations fixed various dates from the creation for the coming of the Messiah, ranging from the year 5118 A.M. (A.D.

[1] Enoch 10:12.

1358) to 5700. Among Christians we find as early as Barnabas the calculation of the world-sabbath at the end of six thousand years, and this passed over to Tertullian and Irenæus. Hippolytus adopts the six thousand years, but divides the sum into twelve periods as already indicated. This was easy according to the chronology of the Greek version of the Old Testament, for it makes the Christian era begin about 5500 years after the creation. This Father, therefore, names the year 500 A.D. as the termination of the present world-order. The conclusion follows logically from the premises.

A distinct exception to the current belief was made by Augustine. His view of the two commonwealths practically identified the Church with the Kingdom of God, and he had no use for a catastrophic overturning of things. Apparently he expected the gradual triumph of the Christian system as organized in the Catholic Church. Although this view would naturally commend itself to highchurchmen, the identification fell into discredit among thoughtful men when corruption invaded the Church itself, and when also wars, famines, and pestilences made it evident that the golden age had not yet dawned. As the year 1000 approached, men reminded themselves of the Apocalyptic statement that Satan would be bound for a thousand years and then be loosed for a brief period. This is in line with the Jewish scheme of the Messianic era, according to which the advent of the Deliverer would be preceded by a time of trouble — the birth-woes of the new order of things. The hostile world-powers, hypostatized by Ezekiel in the name of Gog, had become a standing eschatological figure, the Antichrist. He was the incarnation of all that is evil, the exact opposite of the returning Christ. Historically, he owes his origin to the Nero of the apostolic age who is apparently meant by the enigmatical number 666 (Rev. xiii:18), given as the number of the beast. Since Nero had not returned, as the apocalyptic writer expected, it was held that the prophecy was still to be fulfilled. Irenæus, for example, anticipates the coming of a tyrant whose name will have the numerical value of 666, and that he will reign three

years and six months before being overthrown.[2] It would be unprofitable to follow the attempts which have been made all along the course of history to interpret this mysterious number, the latest finding it in the name of the German Kaiser.

The year 1000 passed without any especially notable interference of Providence, and although isolated thinkers still tried their hand at the interpretation of prophecy, no general expectation of the end of the world seems to have been entertained until the time of Joachim of Floris, who was born in 1145 and died in 1201. His impulse came from his conviction of the decadence of the Church, its efforts after worldly power, its impotence to secure peace in the world, the prevalence of heresy, and the rapid advance of the Moslem power. He must have been a man of unusual gifts, for he had many devoted followers who saw in him a worker of miracles, as well as an inspired prophet. He did not claim to be a prophet in the sense that he received new revelations, but was convinced that he had the gift of interpreting Scripture. He was, however, the child of his age, in that he accepted the allegorical and typical interpretations, and also in that he believed the monastic orders to be the predestined saviours of the Church. His general theory was that the world's history would fill three periods. The first, that of married people, was represented by the Old Testament. The second, that of the clergy, was represented by the New Testament. The third, yet to come, would be that of the monks, and would have the true spiritual interpretation of the Bible. In each period he discovered forty-two generations corresponding to each other, although the Old Testament generations covered more time than the others because of the greater age of the antediluvian Patriarchs. In the first period Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the counterparts of Zacharias, John, and Jesus in the second. The twelve sons of Jacob represent the twelve Apostles of Jesus. Moses and Aaron are renewed in Paul and Barnabas. The three great periods are assigned to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, respectively. The forty-two generations of the second

[2] *Contra Hæreses*, V, 30.

era would end in the year 1260, and the new heavens and new earth would then appear. This climax would be preceded by the appearance of the traditional Antichrist. Joachim went so far as to declare in the year 1190 that the Antichrist was already born though he had not yet manifested his power. A similar announcement had been made a century earlier by Archbishop Ranieri of Florence.[3] We are here in the region of unfulfilled prophecy, but it may be interesting to note that the identification of the Pope with Antichrist, which we have probably supposed to be a Protestant notion, is much older than the Reformation. It is found at least as early as the year 991, and was then openly made by an Archbishop in a Synod at Rheims. It reappears at different intervals, and was of course welcome to the Protestants, in whose polemic it became a staple charge. Millennial expectations revived at the Reformation, and Luther is said to have remarked that the world would come to an end before the year 1548. This is a recurrent phenomenon in the history of attempted reforms. When the leader in any movement is disappointed at the lethargy of his followers and the opposition of the mass of men, he looks for an act of God to accomplish what seems beyond human power. Protestant revival of the study of Scripture contributed to millenarian anticipations. Cocceius, whose general principles we studied in connection with the Federal Theology, interpreted the book of Daniel as containing a scheme of the world's history down to his own time. He interpreted the vision of the four beasts in this way: The lion is the kingdom of Constantine, the bear represents the Goths and Vandals, the leopard is identified with the Muhammadan power, and the fourth beast is the empire of Charlemagne. On this basis the Papal power of course becomes the Antichrist who will be overcome by Jesus at his second coming, and this the commentator thought could not be far away.

The disturbances in England in the seventeenth century gave rise to apocalyptic expectations. Since the great world-

[3] Doellinger, *The Prophetic Spirit and Prophecies of the Christian Era* (1872), p. 290.

empires of Daniel were four in number, the Messianic kingdom which was to replace them was called the Fifth Monarchy. Hence the movement of certain revolutionists is known as that of the Fifth Monarchy Men. Their readiness to revolt was based on the belief that the three and a half years of Daniel were now at an end and their exhortation was: Therefore up, O ye saints, to take the kingdom and to possess it, for the gentiles have possessed the outer court for this forty-two months and 'tis now time to arise, yea high time to deliver thyself, O Sion, and shake off the dust, to lay waste the land of Nimrod with the sword.[4] The declaration of one of these sectaries to Cromwell that the next vial to be poured out is a scorching hot one, and must fall upon the apostate professors that have forsaken the cause of Christ, and the same man's prediction of the third woe now at hand, shows how the Book of Revelation had taken hold of men's imaginations. In spite of Cromwell's services to the Puritan cause, there were not wanting those who identified him with Antichrist, or with the Beast which is in essence the same thing. The interpretation of the little horn in Daniel as William the Conqueror and his descendants, finally cut off in the person of Charles I, does not surprise us, nor does the expectation of the revolutionists that they will carry their arms as far as Rome, which they expected to reach in 1660. Six years later their movement would be so triumphant (they thought) that all the world would be convinced, and then Christ would reign in person, destroying all those kings, priests, and lawyers, who were usurping the powers that belong to him alone. Then the saints would rule the earth, executing vengeance on all his enemies.

It may be thought superfluous to describe these discredited expectations, yet they have their use in showing us how men, possessed of an erroneous idea of what the Bible is, may be mistaken in the deductions they make. Not long after the failure of the Fifth Monarchy Men, Robert Fleming pub-

[4] Rogers, *Some Account of the Life and Opinions of a Fifth Monarchy Man* (1867), p. 301.

lished an Apocalyptical Key which has had considerable influence on later speculation. This book, published in 1701, gives the postulates upon which the author supposes all expositors of the Apocalypse to agree. They are: That the Revelation contains the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the Christian Church until the end of the world; that the mystical Babylon doth signify Rome in an antichristian Church; that this, therefore, cannot be Rome pagan, but Rome Papal; and that the seven heads of the beast are the seven forms of government which obtained among the Romans. A further postulate, perhaps the one most important in its influence, although not original with Fleming, is that where days are spoken of in the Apocalypse, years are meant. The scheme of the Apocalypse, as every reader knows, is based on the number seven. There are seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials, arranged in that order. Fleming finds that the seven seals indicate events which took place between the writing of Revelation and the year 337. He then traces the seven trumpets, making them show the history down to the Reformation, which he dates in 1516. The seven vials will then cover the period from that time down to the year 2000. According to this, Fleming himself was living in the time of the fifth vial, and he was more modest than most Millenarians in that he did not expect the great crisis to come in his own lifetime. He believed that the 1260 years of the traditional exegesis, however, would come to an end in 1789, or rather he gives his readers the choice between that date and either 1848 or 1866.

We found among Fleming's postulates the one which interpreted the *days* of the Apocalyptic writers as *years*. The way in which this axiom, as I may call it, is applied by the interpreters, may be illustrated from a work now forgotten which was written in the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, and published immediately afterwards.[5] Four of the numerical

[5] Bicheno, *Explanation of Scripture Prophecy*. The Signs of the Times, or the Dark Prophecies of Scripture illustrated by the Application of Present Important Events. The American edition is dated 1796.

data of Daniel and Revelation are made the basis of the author's identification. It is significant that the book or pamphlet was written when minds were agitated by the events of the French Revolution. It is in times of political upheaval that attention is called to apocalyptical programs. The four numbers which concern us are: first, 2300 found in Daniel viii:14. There we read that the angel assured Daniel that the time during which the sanctuary should be desecrated amounted to 2300 evening-mornings. The interest of the inquirer in the daily morning and evening sacrifice of the temple accounts for the form of the answer. What distressed him was that the regular worship of God, which consisted in the bringing of these two sacrifices, was no longer offered. The suspension then was to last so many mornings and evenings, or 1150 days. Later the writer gives us another terminus for the persecution in the words "a time, times and a half" (xii:7, also in vii:25). Revelation borrows this figure, but gives the equivalent as forty-two months or 1260 days. Daniel again gives us 1290 days, and in immediate sequence 1335 (xii:11 and 12). Critical conjectures concerning the reason for these apparently discordant statements need not now be developed. The interpreters whom we have in mind take all of them as part of the infallible revelation, and make all of them mean years instead of days.

Now it is obvious that by making any given year the terminus of the alleged period and reckoning backwards a *terminus a quo* can be found. This seems to be the method of Bicheno. Assuming that the events of the French Revolution were predicted in Scripture, he reckoned backward to find the starting point of the predicted period. Thus, from the year 1789 we subtract 1260, one of the revealed figures, and we come to 529. In this year the Code of Justinian was published, "the stronghold of clerical tyranny," and about the same time, we are assured, the Bishop of Rome was recognized by the Emperor as having supreme judicial power. Taking the next figure (1290), which is just thirty years more, we assume that the conflict with the Antichrist which began

in 1789, will last thirty years. Therefore, the Millennium will dawn in 1819. And this is confirmed by another calculation based on the number 2300, taken again to mean so many years. In the year 481 B.C. Xerxes set out to invade Greece. From this date the 2300 years bring us again to 1819 A.D.

It may seem unprofitable to dwell longer on these aberrations as we must call them, but two more may be briefly mentioned because they are of American origin. One of these is the calculation of William Miller, which had considerable vogue in the first half of the nineteenth century. Miller's book consists of a series of lectures published in collected form in 1842. But the lectures had been delivered at different times as far back as the year 1833. The title sufficiently indicates the author's belief: *Evidence from Scripture and History, of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year 1843.* The calculation is similar to that of Fleming. The *terminus a quo* of the 2300 years is assumed to be the time of the decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem (457 B.C. according to Miller), and the end will then come in 1843. "Or take 70 weeks of years, being 490 years, from 2300 and it will leave 1810 after Christ's death. Add his life (because we begin to reckon our time at his birth), which is 33 years, and we come to the same A.D 1843." [6]

The second American calculation is that of Pastor Russell, already alluded to. His reckoning is like the others, that is, it is based on the theory that days are put for years. Taking the seven times mentioned by Daniel, he supposes them to mean seven periods of 360 years each. These 2520 years would bring us, beginning with Zedekiah (606 B.C.), to 1914, which is, therefore, the year of the Second Coming. The Pastor was consistent in that he supposed Christ actually to have come to earth again, but to be hidden from view until he shall choose to reveal himself. It is perhaps superfluous to point out that according to the best authorities Zedekiah did not come to the throne until 597, and that we have no

[6] *Evidence*, p. 54.

trace of a Hebrew year of 360 days. The Hebrew year was a lunar year brought into accord with the solar by the intercalation of a month whenever necessary. Seven years on this system would not differ greatly from seven of our years, so that if Daniel meant seven great years, the end would not come as was calculated, but would still be some fifty years away. Interest in an event fifty years away would be much less acute than in one which is expected at once.

Applying this to the situation of the apocalyptic writers, whether Daniel or John, we can see the fallacy of supposing them to have any interest in that which, by hypothesis, was to happen two thousand years in the future. As we have seen, the apocalypses were the agonizing cry of men under persecution, looking for an immediate intervention of God on behalf of His Church. On the Millennarian hypothesis they were told that the conflicts, trials and persecutions of the saints will last nineteen hundred, or twenty-three hundred, years. It is hard to imagine more cruel mockery than such a revelation would be. We have already seen that the effect of the books was in fact to raise the courage of those under trial. It would be impious to suppose that the divine purpose was to deceive the sufferers by raising false expectations. Moreover, the fundamental postulate of this whole series of interpretations, namely, that where days are mentioned in the documents, years are intended, is false. There is no reason to suppose that when Daniel names 2300 evenings and mornings, he means anything but literal evenings and mornings, for his interest was in the daily acts of worship offered at those periods. In the same way, when the New Testament writer says he is telling what is *shortly* to come to pass, and gives forty-two months as the time of tribulation we must take him at his word. And this is confirmed by his statement that the seven heads of the beast are seven kings, of whom five are fallen, one is, and one is yet to come. This can only mean that there are to be seven Roman emperors in all; only one more reign before the grand consummation.

The result of such an inquiry as we have now made (and

the number of false calculations might have been increased almost indefinitely) should be to show the need of a really historical treatment of the apocalyptic literature. That literature has a well defined place in the history of human thought. Among Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians and Muhammadans, it has developed along similar lines. It is the product of religious hope in times of despondency. It has no conception of the working of natural law in the world of nature or of man. It looks for a catastrophic interference of God in the affairs of the nations. It doubts the efficacy of human effort, and the reality of human progress. And if the objector says: If Daniel expected the Messiah in the near future, or if John thought the Second Coming was near at hand, they were not inspired — we can only reply: If by inspired you mean supernaturally informed of any exact dates for supernatural interference in human affairs, the objection holds good. The repeated attempts to make these authors tell us of the course of history, show the fallacy of expecting that sort of revelation. What the Apocalyptic John did was to set forth in glowing imagery the faith that even in the darkest hours God is caring for His own, and that at the last all will be well with them. That he did this in imagery that came to him from Jewish tradition, and that he made use of language and figures which were of his time and his race, shows only that he was a man. This is what the expositor needs to learn.

Reviewing the ground gone over in these essays, we are tempted to say that we have simply noted certain forms of human error. But this would be a narrow view. It is indeed clear to us at this more advanced stage of thought that in the Pentateuch the Jew has not a complete and final code of ethics unchangeable for all time. But on the other hand there are in the Book lessons for him and for all mankind. Think what the Decalogue has been through the centuries or that summing up of the Law and the Prophets which Jesus urged in the two great commandments! Again, from our

point of view, it is plain that the dogmatic theologian is wrong in forcing from Scripture by allegory and type a revealed philosophy, a faith once for all delivered to the saints. But if the Bible is not this, it is much more — it is the record of the religious experience of men terribly in earnest in seeking for God. And this record is one of struggle and conflict. Rightly interpreted, these books show us how the higher and purer religion overcame the lower and partial conceptions of God and of His will. Further, from our point of view we are convinced that the Millennarian is wrong in supposing that he can from these documents discover when the present world-order will be ended by a special revelation of the Lord from heaven. But it still remains true that these documents are forward-looking, that the men who wrote them had an unconquerable faith in the righteousness of God, and an abiding hope that His rule would become a reality, and the kingdoms of the world would acknowledge His sway. In fine, the Bible is a book of religion. Reflecting the experience of believers in earlier ages, it makes its appeal to all who seek for God in the time now present.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE titles of most of the works cited in the essays are given in the notes. The following works treat more or less fully of the history of exegesis.

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WOGUE (L.), *Histoire de la Bible et de l'exégèse Biblique jusqu'à nos Jours* (1881). This work is devoted to Jewish exegesis.

GILBERT (GEORGE HOLLEY), *Interpretation of the Bible, a Short History* (1908). An excellent introduction to the subject, treating both Old Testament and New.

FULLERTON (KEMPER), *Prophecy and Authority, a Study in the History of the Doctrine and Interpretation of Scripture* (1919). The latest and one of the best discussions of the subject.

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